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CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

**A Few Straight Tips Regarding Our
Social Condition.**

—BY—

J. H. TILDEN, M. D.

“To say what should be said, to only say what should
be said, and to say it as it should be said.—*Aristotle.*”

**PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR,
DENVER, COLO.**

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DEDICATED TO
MY BELOVED DAUGHTER,
EDNA L. TILDEN.

PREFACE.



It is an attribute of human nature to become accustomed to danger, especially when it appears not to threaten a personal attack.

People can rest easily so long as discomfort, unhappiness, poverty, and misery are confined to their neighbors.

So long as a contagious disease is in some other neighborhood, it excites no special concern.

The good citizen rests contented when he thinks moral disease is isolated and confined to a prescribed district. He takes no notice of the intermediate forms, nor even thinks how the initiatory process is carried on for fitting victims for the last stage of moral disease.

Good citizens nurse themselves into such a stage of lethargy, that common warning ceases to arouse them, and, if they happen to be jostled out of their apathetic state, they resent it by falling back upon their dignity, and demanding that they be not approached on a subject so foreign to their natures. This unapproachableness of popular sentiment is so well known that the few who would speak out are deterred.

It is time for some one who is indifferent to policy,

PREFACE.

who is intrepid enough to oppose popular sentiment, and who ignores the conventional lines of propriety drawn by ignorant prudes, to come forward and tear away the mask which conceals the incubator of moral disease, and let humanity come face to face with facts, no matter how repulsive they are. Health Boards are at work in every city in an attempt to stamp out contagious diseases, and, if there was a disease in the whole catalogue that caused as many deaths and as much suffering as the diseases referred to in this book, there would be state and government appropriations made sufficient to control it.

It may be asked: "Why approach the layman with this subject?" For the simple reason that it is the business of every layman to know something about preventive medicine. Physicians must have the help of all the people to be able to control disease; and, if help comes from the people, they must be educated, intelligent. The people must know how to avoid taking a disease. False modesty and ignorant fastidiousness have held full sway in the popular mind long enough. As long as ignorance is purity, moral disease will thrive.

If it is immoral to write a warning to the ignorant and innocent, which will save them from an impending danger, then this book is immoral.

If it is immoral to write facts so plain that innocent boys and girls who read them will be saved from making the mistakes others have made, then this book is immoral.

PREFACE.

If it is immoral to write a book which, if read, will not only better the lives of the readers, but also the lives of the coming generation, then this book is immoral.

If the man who warns another of a threatened danger owes him an apology for doing so, then an apology should be offered for this book.

If a person who saves an innocent young woman her honor owes her an apology for doing so, then an apology should be offered for this book.

If there are people who cry out after reading this book: "*Sensation! exaggeration!*" let them go to the victims and get the truths of this book verified.

If the readers of this book will be as honest in their criticisms as the author has been in his convictions and object, their consciences will not be outraged.

The charity meted out to the several characters is not affected; it is in keeping with cause and effect. A charity which cannot take in all human mistakes is no charity at all.

J. H. TILDEN, M. D.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.



FIRST.

DR. HEADLY'S ADVICE TO MRS. BENNEY.

Dr. Headly had just finished examining microscopically a minute portion of pathological tissue taken from a diseased structure of one of his patients, and soliloquized thus:

“Just as I expected; that microscope has confirmed my worst suspicions; her disease is cancer, and well advanced. I fear the limit where hope can be given has been reached. Surgery is the only alternative, and if the disease has taken hold of the contiguous structures, it is worse than folly to operate. Poor woman! how can I tell her that there is no hope?”

Robert Benney and his wife had stepped into the office unobserved by the doctor, so absorbed was he in the thought of his patient, and had heard his soliloquy, upon which Robert exclaimed:

“It will not be necessary, doctor; she is safe for a cure in your hands.

“Robert, is that you? I wish my skill was on a par

with your opinion of it. I could then cope with anything. But, alas! people die, and people get well, in spite of me, the same as with other doctors."

"Dr. Headly, it gives me pleasure to introduce you to my wife. Mrs. Benney, permit me to introduce Dr. Headly, of whom you have heard me speak so often."

"Mrs. Benney. I am pleased to make your acquaintance, and especially as the wife of my young friend."

"Thank you, doctor; the pleasure is mutual. I feel quite well acquainted with you after hearing so much of you."

"I congratulate you both, and wish for you a long and prosperous life."

"Doctor, now that I have made you acquainted with my wife, I must be off to attend to my business, which I have somewhat neglected since becoming a benedict. I leave her with you. She has some questions of very great importance to ask you, and as soon as I get a little time and can find you at leisure, I am coming in to tell you all about my trip, my present happiness, and future prospects. Good-day."

"Run in any time, Robert. You know you are always welcome. Good-day."

"Mrs. Benney, you have a splendid husband. He's none of your fast young men. He's as pure and innocent as a girl. I hope you both will go through life as you have started, innocent and pure."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Thank you, doctor. I hope your good opinion of us is merited, and that you will have no cause to change it. The world appears all so good to me, and I hope I shall not need to change my opinion.”

“I hope not, Mrs. Benney. At least I hope you will grow in wisdom as you grow in experience, so that charity will compensate where, now, lack of wisdom might not. If we have a healthy growth, our knowledge of cause and effect will ameliorate our opinions of those we recognize as perverse. So you have some questions to ask me, have you, Mrs. Benney?”

“Yes, doctor. Now that I am married there are many things I want to know that I never dreamed of before, but that which I regard as of most importance is to know how to avoid the customary additions to a family for a few years.”

“I could have guessed this as your first question, for the world has grown so perverse that this is the desire of nearly all young married people. I am sorry that so soon after our acquaintance I must be forced to take a position in opposition to your desire. The world has become fearfully perverse in its opinions on this question. I hold that people should not get married till they have arrived at a point where they are willing to make the so-called pleasures of life subservient to the great duties and responsibilities inseparable from married life. Few, if any, young people have a thought, in contemplating the marital state,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

of the duties they owe to posterity, and how much responsibility rests upon them for the character of the progeny that are to evolve from the combining of the qualities of the two natures that are to be joined together as husband and wife."

"Doctor, you do not mean to tell me that it is my duty to at once begin to assume the duties of maternity, when I am so young and full of life? Oh, horrors! I cannot bear to think of it!"

"Is it possible, Mrs. Benney, that this is the first time you have given this subject thought?"

"Yes, doctor; I did not know that life would be any different, save that I would have my dear husband all to myself, and that we could for several years yet go on with our youthful pleasures the same as before, with really less annoyance. What is there in life, if we are to make our debut and have a year or two of social enjoyment, and then settle down into the prison of a humdrum, commonplace married life, with no enjoyment, and not only know no pleasure, but what is still more galling, become nurse and slave to a lot of unwelcome children?"

"I see, Mrs. Benney, your ideas of life are the common irrational ideas of the day. You have had no sober thoughts. You are as unfit for the marital state as a child would be. Life is not what you think it; at least married life is not. Marriage should not be debased into legalized prostitution, which it is when it is contracted with such

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

ideas as you hold. A woman should not consent to marriage until she has made up her mind to take upon herself the honorable responsibility of a mother. The world needs mothers—women who can realize the seriousness of building for themselves a type of womanhood that will find a fitting duplicate in the yet unborn. Do you know that children are the prototypes of the lives of the parents, that your type of life, with what modification your husband gives, is a forecasting of the type of the life yet to be born? Of course the social environments amid which children are brought up modify the results somewhat, but the general cast is confined to parentage.”

“No, doctor; I thought children were much what they were made by education. But, be that as it may, I have time to look up that matter before I have any of my own, for I am determined to postpone the time for some years yet before settling down into a prosaic old woman.”

“Mrs. Benney, are you willing to live for pleasure for a few years yet; revel in luxury and idleness, which the role of a society devotee means; keep late hours, break down your health, and then, on this wreck of body and mind, build for the future? Look the world over, see the perversion, the reckless desire to shirk responsibility, the thirst for wealth, to the obliteration of all human impulses, the wreckage to honor, virtue, manhood, womanhood, home, and society, and then say you will be a party to a continuation of such diabolical projection!”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Doctor, I do not understand you. I cannot understand how I am to become a party to the perpetuation of such great evils as you hint have an existence, by asking for a little information which, if given, will only assist my husband and myself to avoid precipitating ourselves prematurely into the responsibility of a family. I am sure this is purely a personal matter, and cannot add to or take from anybody’s rights. It is no one’s business but our own.”

“Mrs. Benney, this is an infinite subject, and one that could not be exhausted in weeks. It is more far-reaching than your inexperience with the world will permit you to comprehend without much time, thought, and experience. You have tacitly admitted that sometime you expect to have children. If this is true, you and your husband should at once begin to build for those future lives, by putting yourselves in the proper mental and physical condition. If you start out in married life by educating yourselves up to the belief that children are something to be avoided, a misfortune, a trouble, in fact a nuisance, you are building a type of mind and nervous system that will always be either in open or suppressed rebellion to your progeny, and this type of mind will be transmitted to your children, to curse you and them for all time to come. They will not have the proper love and regard for you; their lives will be cursed by discontent and dissatisfaction; there will be a mutual alienation that neither education nor any amount

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

of training will correct. They will be truly natural-born misanthropists, and will lack the capacity for being educated into altruism. This may not appear to your mind as possible, but it is a fact demonstrated to me daily. This perversion of your mental condition will be exaggerated by a gradual physical breaking down; for now that you are married an evolution is taking place legitimate to the marital state, bringing the reproductive organs into a state of reproductive expectancy, and this natural requirement cannot be disappointed continuously without evil results. Disappointment in any of the physiological functions will react upon the system in many ways, deranging digestion, inducing great nervous troubles, in some cases hysteria, melancholy, and many other diseases. All are not affected in the same way; but few escape, and some are ruined for life, while not a few will eventually die from diseases superinduced by the general perversion of the nervous system."

"Doctor, the picture you lay before me is a revelation, and I cannot presume to question your authority; but I cannot think that the consequences of a little delay on our part will be so bad. You surely cannot discover in our natures such vulnerable material that we will be utterly lost by a slight transgression of nature's laws?"

"I know that there is much perversion as a common stock of inheritance with us all, and, with many of us, all we need to send us drifting with the tide is a little start.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

Your husband is a grand, good fellow, but there is some bad blood in his ancestry, which I hope he has not inherited, and possibly, if his life is correct from now on, he may escape its influences; but, should that inheritance be latent in him, the proper environments might bring it out to ruin you both."

"You do not anticipate anything so dreadful in my husband's case, do you?"

"Not at all, Mrs. Benney, if his life is correct, for he is now a man, and every year adds strength to his individuality. With my eye-glass upon humanity for over a quarter of a century, I have learned not to be surprised at anything; such a contingency is possible, but I hope not probable; but at all events, much depends upon you."

"Upon me, doctor? What can I do, or not do?"

"Mrs. Benney, on his father's side, your husband has an uncle who is a reprobate, a drunkard; and on the mother's side there is an uncle who is a notorious libertine. Your husband's father, in his young manhood, was given to rather a rapid life, but his wife (noble, self-sacrificing woman) has given him an ideal home, and has made him what he is. She has always been a sweetheart to him. If she had been cold-blooded and disposed to shirk responsibility, had a desire to keep up with society in an extravagant degree, expected him to do all the love-making, been selfish and indifferent to duty, he perhaps would have followed the elder brother in debauchery. She has given him

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

her whole life; she has lived for him and been interested in all his business. He has told me that in all their married life she has been to him the same as in their courtship; that she has a smile for him when he comes and when he goes, and bestows upon him many other tokens of tenderness; that she never puts aside those little delicate and deliciously coquettish manners which so delight the lover. Years ago, when he was struggling with poverty, she was ever the helpmeet *par excellence*. Many times, when he had drifted ashore without money, she would surprise him by bringing out a little hidden treasure, saved from her frugal allowance, and was never happier than when she could help him in this way. Of all the women I have ever known I think she is the most sensible; and a grand thing it is, too; for a man of his temperament does not bear up well under adversity. Had he been unfortunately married, the world would never have known of his merits. As it is, the Benney family stands second to none in this country. While Mrs. Benney has fulfilled every domestic requirement, she has not neglected the æsthetic accomplishments, and her brain is stored with a great fund of general information. She keeps pace with her husband, and to-day she is in every way his equal. Many society ladies neglect either their home or their education, which is often the cause of estrangement between husband and wife. Ignorance is almost always the cause of misunderstandings. All women should be educated, and should have the habit

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

of study so thoroughly incorporated in their natures that their time will not drag heavily. The art of self-entertainment, which this habit gives, puts a woman where there is no discontentment, unhealthy longings,, or wishing for other places, other scenes, other environments. There are thousands of unhappy families, because the wife does not know how to get pleasure out of life. Such women are found away from home, often on the slightest excuse. They are restless; they want to see and be seen, and home is neglected. Many such people do not know what their trouble is. Husbands become dissatisfied with their business and sigh for a change. If the change is made, there will be the same unrest and discontent. Some will go through life making a failure at every turn, and the whole cause is a lack of home comforts, that nothing but a contented, satisfied wife will give. Money cannot supply this. The cottage can be exchanged for a mansion, with all that art and money can supply in fittings, etc.; but following like an avenging Nemesis forever is that hydra-headed monster, discontent. The art of self-entertainment is an antidote for nearly all the domestic ills that society is heir to. Mrs. Benney, your husband has been brought up in an ideal, happy home. Make him another, and I am quite sure you will not regret it."

"I thank you, doctor, for your suggestions, and shall try to profit by them, although it will be a little hard to change my ideas all at once."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“My advice to you, Mrs. Benney, is to go home, busy yourself with some congenial employment, and keep busy. Get up in the morning and get at something; if it is not in beautifying your home, at beautifying your intelligence. Never let a day go by without adding at least a little to your fund of information. Read anything and everything that is fit to read. I would not spend time with unhealthy literature, for it begets false ideas. You want practical knowledge—the best poets, historians, works of art, biography, etc. Don’t forget your husband. See that he has a pleasant home, by always being pleasant yourself. Find out what your husband likes, and cater to it, though *not to the loss of your own individuality*. Always have something you have culled out of books to talk to him about. Never spend time in twaddle and gossip. Don’t try to live on billing and cooing. Love your husband, but don’t expect to make your life-work that of eating lover’s confections altogether; mix them up with good, wholesome horse-sense. Don’t find fault and grumble if he is delayed in coming home. Always have time to converse pleasantly with him, even if the dinner is getting cold, for you can eat it if he can; and if he is sensible, as I think he is, he will know when he is to blame for it, and try to do better the next time. Whatever you do, don’t force the dinner to disagree by finding fault. The grumbling habit is easy to cultivate, and evolves in time the most abominable, disgusting of all creatures, the shrew. As to the matter con-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

cerning which you came to consult me, dismiss it from your mind, and gain the composure that comes from an acquiescence in the inevitable. Cultivate a rational, sensible idea of life. Get all the legitimate pleasure out of life you can. Cultivate a disposition to make the most of your destiny. If you can't do as you like, be philosophical, and do what you may. Do not hold to the foolish idea that you can direct your fate. Man's volition should be in doing with vim that which he may, and not what he would. Much valuable time is lost in allowing one's self to become disconcerted by opposition. Never be down-hearted because you must change your plans. Learn to take your defeats in life in a matter-of-fact spirit, and at once become engaged in other things. Possibly the matter you came to consult me about will not be needed in your case. If so, the greater misfortune to you, for a family is not complete without children, and the more the better. Almost all happy families are large ones—every child is a link in the chain of domestic love. If it should be your good fortune to become *enceinte* soon, make up your mind that you will be worthy of the responsibility; every such charge enlarges your nature, if you do not cultivate a rebellious spirit; such cares are ennobling when assumed in the proper spirit. Do your duty. Cultivate a proper love for the yet-to-be-born, and you will find your love enlarging until the little household will be a veritable culture medium for the generation of love to fill earth's void. Love and

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

happiness are as contagious as hate and unhappiness, and the reason there is more hate and unhappiness in the world is because there is more of the latter contagion."

"Doctor, I thank you for your advice, and will promise to do as you say, if you will give me five years' immunity."

"Five years, my dear madam, is just enough time to make or break. Five years will teach you both extravagances that you can't grow out of in a lifetime; perhaps the extra cost of keeping up with society will ruin your husband in his business. The longer you are in society, the more is expected of you, and people with small capital cannot keep up with the rich without impairing their business. It is the wish of Robert's father that he (Robert) should prove his business sagacity before he is willing to entrust him with a large capital, which shows the wisdom of Mr. Benney, Sr. You would not like to be the cause of his failure. Besides, you will not be any more ready at the end of five years than you are are now. Five years will only tend still more to unsettle you. The lack of self-discipline for five years, in shirking responsibility and learning extravagant habits, may lay the foundation for a life of discontent. Besides, you risk your health, in fact, your all."

"Doctor, you have said so much to me in opposition to my wishes, that I will have to take some time to digest it. If I were not convinced that all you have said has been for my good, I should feel a little piqued at the result

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

of this interview. I am sure that my husband will be disappointed. Good-day."

"Mrs. Benney, your husband is a sensible fellow. Tell him what I have said, and I know he will be satisfied. Good-day."

After Mrs. Benney had left his office, Dr. Headly mused long and deeply:

"If I mistake not, Robert Benney's wife has a mind of her own. Well do I remember her mother, and the breach that took place between us twenty years ago, because I would not engage in malpractice for her. How well she has carried out her threat! 'If you don't help me out of this trouble, I shall never employ you as my family physician again, and I shall use all the influence I have against you.' Since that time we have been strangers, and this girl has never known me until now. She little dreams that had it not been for my influence she would have been cut off in gestation. The curse is upon her; if my idea of prenatal curse is correct, Robert Benney's prospects for marital happiness are not the most flattering.

"I have not met the mother since the birth of this daughter, and cannot know how much her morals have declined since that time. She has not had another child, and no doubt she has found more accommodating physicians. Occasionally, in the line of professional duties, I have heard of her being ill, at one time with peritonitis, so rumor had it; at another time there was a well-defined

CURSED BEFORE BIKTE.

rumor that she was to have a surgical operation performed for abscess in the pelvis. If these rumors were correct, no doubt her diseases were the result of malpractice. She is a high-spirited woman, and unquestionably has been very careful of the daughter's education; but I can see from the daughter's manner that there never has been the intimacy between her mother and herself that there should have been. I imagine the mother has shirked her responsibility, and the child has been brought up in grand style away from home.

“My talk with Mrs. Benney will fall short of good. Her ideas of pleasure are not changed, and she is determined to influence her husband to seek help elsewhere. She has no ideas that are at all practical.

“I wonder if it is not a fact that humanity can learn nothing except by experience! This is a question I have long tried to solve to my own satisfaction, and have not yet settled myself into a belief. I see people who appear to take warning and are benefited by advice, and others who go blindly on, and in spite of all warnings do not appear to realize danger until it is upon them, and then give utterance to surprise; while others appear to be hypnotized, and walk deliberately and knowingly into their ruin, seemingly forced by a power over which they have no control. There is no question that the special brain-centers are at fault. The faculty of cautiousness is not developed, and this lack of development leads many on to an untimely

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

death, or, what is worse, bankruptcy of health and morality, which is an end to self-comfort for life.

“I know that the advice I have given Mrs. Benney is in keeping with the moral atmosphere in which Robert was brought up; but that will cut no figure, for he is desperately in love with her, much more than she is with him; and what cannot a woman do with a man when she owns him, body and mind, through his emotions? Many men fling their sense of right at the feet of the woman they love, until the lives of both are ruined. Men who stand out before the world as austere, swayers of public opinion, are as weak as babes in the hands of the woman they love.

“The more I see of the world, the more I am satisfied that the moral status of society is in the hands of women. The question ‘Is marriage a failure?’ I can answer in the affirmative, judging by what I have seen of it. Not that it should be, but because of ignorance. The first five years usually determine the question; sometimes sooner. Those first five years are spent in putting in a foundation. If they are spent in cultivating an expertness in disappointing physiological functions, either by preventing conception or by foeticidal practice, there follows the blunting of that fine sense of honor and virtue which is only a product of mental purity. Following in the wake of blunted virtue comes loss of self-respect and self-confidence, which manifests itself in the suspecting and doubting of others,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

shirking responsibility; and the dreaded uncertainty that accompanies these feelings will forever keep the mind upon the rack. Such a foundation is built upon sand, and must crumble.

“There is something dreadfully demoralizing about this practice. It is partly due to the fact that people in need of information in this line must call upon medical men, and that the medical men who encourage people in this practice, are, as a rule, morally debased, and use their expertness in this diabolical work to further their own selfish ends—a means to enlarge their business, and a rich field in which to satisfy their lust.

“People who are such moral perverts as to require that sort of advice and practice are not surrounded by the bulwark of defense such as a pure mind affords, and in seeking advice they invite attack from the sybarite who is clothed in a professional garb, and is so far forgetful of humanity that through his distorted gaze he sees nothing in woman but the siren who is enticing him to his voluptuous feast.

“The boldness of these attacks can only be explained by the moral defenselessness of the attacked. What a fearful hold this has gained upon society! It is getting dangerously near the point where a physician who will not cater to this outrage against nature is looked upon as being *passe*, and his income is greatly reduced. If a physician expects to be the medical adviser of a large per centage of

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

people who pay their bills, he must cater to their wishes in this regard.

“ Well do I remember the first applicant I had for my services in this line of work. I was a young, struggling physician, needing patrons, money, everything. The applicant was one of the most influential men in the city, a high churchman, a leader in the elite circles of society. He told me that I should be his family physician and that he would throw me all his influence, which meant much. I declined. In a few days I heard that the wife had been taken suddenly and seriously ill, and that a popular physician, also a deacon in a church, had the case in hand. The poor woman came very near dying, and at the end of a month I was called to see her, and succeeded in bringing her out; for which service I was rewarded by being retained as the family physician.

“ I have not always been so fortunate, however. I have lost the patronage of hundreds of families because I would not help them in this health-destroying practice.

“ The demand for this class of work has increased considerably in the last twenty five years. At times I am almost persuaded that the practice should be legalized and permitted to destroy itself. I am sure children born under the curse of prenatal hate had better never be born. They are a curse to themselves and perverters and distorters of society. Either foeticidal practice should be legalized or laws should be enacted forcing people with a mania for

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

murder of this kind to undergo an operation for unsexing them.

“The great popularity that ovariectomy has had for the past few years is largely due to the selfish desire of those submitting to the operation to put themselves into a condition to avoid child-bearing, and unscrupulous surgeons, desirous of making themselves famous, have taken advantage of this imbecility on the part of their patients to multiply needless and useless operations, thereby prostituting the grandest of all arts to a disgraceful purpose.

“Ah! Mrs. Benney, little do you know of the danger lurking in the cup you are so determined to drink to the bitter dregs, made all the more dangerous by your magnificent physique and beautiful face, along with an inherited perversion bordering so closely upon moral imbecility that it will not require much more time to evolve complete moral idiocy.”

SECOND.

MR. AND MRS. BENNEY'S TALK OVER DR. HEADLY'S ADVICE.

Robert Benney was very busy gathering up and arranging the details of his business, and lunched downtown after sending a note to his wife explaining his lack of time to join her at the expected hour. On reaching home in the evening he was delighted to find everything so snug and pleasant. After dinner, which was everything a hungry man could ask, mixed as it was with much pleasant conversation, so conducive to good digestion, they repaired to the library.

"Well, dearest," said Robert, "how did you and the doctor make out? He is the best man in the world. He has been our family physician for years. Many is the time he has cheated green apples out of an opportunity to get in their grip, as well as their gripe, on me. He is next to my father and mother to me."

"And where do I come in, Robert?—after father, mother, and doctor, I suppose."

"Oh, you delicious little pouter! you are a part of me, the best part, the greatest part. Where I use the personal pronoun, I, it means you, with me as a caudal appendage."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

You see, we have accomplished the wonderful feat of destroying a mathematical fact, by demonstrating that one and one make one, not two; and if the doctor fails us in the prescription we desire, we may be forced to demonstrate to the world that the old rule of subtraction is capable of being distorted into proving that the remainder is greater than the amount after deducting the subtrahend."

"How is that, Robert? Are you crazy?"

"Can't you understand that one from two leaves three?"

"Shame! you rogue! But I thought you just told me that we two were one?"

"So I did. The more a miracle, for then you have one from one making three. This may appear perplexing to common minds, but I can't see why, for it is the common minds that have always understood the Trinity, which is three in one and one in three; and in my example, I can prove it by demonstration, whereas, in the case of the Trinity, only those with the eye of faith can see it."

"We had better change the subject, Robert, for you are becoming sacrilegious."

"Well, dearest, I am not much given to sacrificing an opportunity to carry my point, even if I must become satirical on religious subjects. You know jokers and buffoons are failures when confined to propriety. However, how did you and the doctor come out?"

"Well, Robert, I don't like him. He is a sort of animated moral digest. He turned himself loose and deliv-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

ered to me a homily on fœticide, economy, health, morality, and everything else, I never dreamed there was so much bad in the world as he hinted at. He would make one believe that destruction followed close on the heels of the slightest indiscretion. I don't like him; I never did like those people who are so wonderfully interested in other people's affairs that they feel at liberty to lecture any and every one coming near them."

"But, my dear, you called upon the doctor for his advice, and you would not have thought any more of him if he had refused you without giving a reason, than you now do for his refusal accompanied by a reason."

"How do you know he refused me?"

"That is easy to tell: You don't like him. The fact that he will not do as you like is enough to set you against him. What did he say was his reason for not giving you the desired information?"

Mrs. Benney ran over the principal points of Dr. Headly's talk with her, and when she had finished, Robert said:

"And this is why you dislike him? Such ingratitude! Just think: he must have given you more than hour, and in that hour he has given you his best opinion, based on years of reading and experience; and then you show this kind of appreciation!"

"There was no other patient in while I was there, so he was not very busy."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Do you know that Dr. Heady values his few moments between patients more than the money he receives for professional services? He has learned the value of a moment, and I hope his patients have learned to appreciate him and to know what his services and time are worth, and pay him well for them. For my part, the man who betters my life by teaching me how to live is worth more to me than those who will permit me to go blindly on in ignorance and superstition, and give me something to take, when I have no idea how it will act upon me; and probably my wisdom, so far as that is concerned, is as profound as theirs. I have not much faith in doctors who have faith in medicine. The best evidence in the world of an ignorant and dishonest doctor (the two attributes are inseparable) is when one will tell you that he can cure you. About as strong language of this order as I can tolerate is when a doctor will say: ‘I think I can make some suggestions which, if you can carry them out, will soon restore you to health.’ I feel sorry for the ignorant credulity that most people exhibit in believing that they can outrage nature all they please, and continue to do so as long as they live, and that all they need to do is to call upon some doctor and get a prescription, which is to be filled at some drug store, and then take it and defy disease. We laugh at the heathen fetish-worship of the dead, sun-worship, etc., etc., but these things can be excused when compared at this day and age with the blind ignorance and

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

faith shown towards doctors and their medicines. There is but one other belief as disgusting to my mind, and that is regarding salvation. People think they can be as mean as the meanest; that they can live in defiance of all law and order, prostitute all human attributes, and if they feel that there is a liability of not living long, they apply to some church (which represents just so many Damnation Insurance Companies) and take out a little insurance, which they will permit to lapse if they imagine at any time that their life's expectancy has increased."

"Robert, that is not a nice way to speak about churches. It is not well to find fault with a whole system because of a wrong of some of the weakest parts."

"The whole system is built upon the principle of do right for God's sake, Christ's sake, the church's sake, law's sake,—for everything's sake except for the sake of the individual who is doing the right. My religion says, do right for the sake of doing right; because it is the best thing to do; because it is conducive to making us better as members of society, as citizens of the nation. We are better husbands, brothers, fathers, and mothers; and we get our reward here, 'ten, and sometimes an hundred fold.' It is better to have faith in getting the reward here, because if there should be rewards in another life (everything in keeping), those who are rewarded here will be rewarded there. It is a great misfortune, it has always seemed to me, to teach people to do right for future reward. We

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

shall never be evolved into the proper condition of life until we have forgotten all about future rewards, and live and act the best because it is the natural thing to do and brings present reward. When we are healthy and normal in mind and body, we shall not need laws to govern us, neither shall we need to be stimulated to duty by a promise of reward or by fear of punishment."

"Robert, if I were blindfolded, and did not know that it is you talking, I would think it Dr. Headly, for it is much as he went on all the time I was in his office."

"Well, my dear, I have heard the doctor talk quite a good deal in our family, and I don't doubt that I have many of his ideas. In fact, I think him just about right on everything I have ever heard him express himself upon. You could not pay me a compliment that I appreciate more than to tell me I talk like Dr. Headly. I wish I could."

"Robert, aren't you a little disappointed at the result of my visit to the doctor?"

"Not at all, my dear. If the doctor had not been honest with us, some day we should have known it, and then we should have fallen out with him; but as he has unselfishly given us good advise, it will be our duty to him and to ourselves to take it."

"Really, Robert, I think he is a little too prosaic for this age. He has outlived his usefulness, and should be turned to the wall. We are to-day easily second to none

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

with the bon-ton society of this city, and we shall be compelled to conform to the customs of the best. You know, Robert, we could do no more vulgar thing than to at once have a child. Such affairs as that belong to the common and low. Really, I can't see but that we shall have to employ some one of the society doctors. If you have no objection, Dr. Fox has been my mother's physician for years; in fact, I know of no other; but so far as I am concerned, I never have needed a physician, hence I do not know anything more about one than another. But I do not think any of the leading doctors would hesitate to give the advice we want."

"Dearest, I don't like to oppose you in this matter, but I think it unwise to give up an honest, conscientious, able physician for one we are not sure of, simply to obtain information that may ruin our lives."

"You are foolish, Robert, to talk that way."

"Did not Dr. Headly say so, dearest?"

"Yes, but what of that? His advise was gratuitous. He is a crank. He takes pleasure in opposing people, and it has become a business with him to oppose; and nothing pleases his vanity more than to bring people to see as he does. It is purely a matter of pride and conceit. I tell you, Robert, all this goody-goody advice from homilists who would reform the world must not be looked upon too seriously. I am disposed to recognize such people as egotists—conceited seditionaries, whom society could well

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

do without. Tell me, if you can, of what use such advice is when you see people living day after day, year in and year out, in open defiance of such instructions, and enjoying immunity from the curses he would have us believe would follow in the wake of transgression?"

"Well, my dear, I have great faith in the doctor, and cannot suddenly look upon him as ascetic, eccentric, egotistical, or fanatical. I think he is too profound a man to be accused of filling such debased chinks in society. However, we will dismiss the subject for the present, and I will call on the doctor and learn more fully his meaning concerning us."

"All I have to say, Robert, is this: We can't do differently from the set in which we move. There are Bessie Cline and Jessie New, my most intimate friends, and if I should do differently from them and from what people generally expect of young married people, they will be poking fun at us. Bessie was over to-day, and we had a long talk about it. She says she is determined to keep clear of incumbrances for several years yet; at least until they are as well started in life as they want to be. I told her all about my interview with the doctor, and she said he was an old foggy. She recommended Dr. Fox or Dr. Dripps. They do a large practice with people of our station, and you very seldom hear of Dr. Headly. Besides, she told me that if we needed any information or services in this line, either of these doctors would give it, and that

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

if attended to early it did not amount to anything.”

“ Well, dearest, we cannot follow the advice of such rattle-brained people as those two girls. We had better drop the subject and make up our minds to be as content and happy as we can with whatever comes to us. For my part, I don’t believe in outraging the body. You are young and healthy, and I want to see you remain so. We have had a great deal of pleasure, and we shall continue to have more, even if we do not try to find it in some prescribed course. I don’t think it a very sensible thing for us to permit other people to outline our lives for us. I have often heard father say that his real pleasure began when he got married, and that every addition to the family only intensified the pleasure.”

“ Quite different from my mother’s report. I’ve often heard her say that her pleasure stopped with the advent of her baby, and did not return until I was old enough to take care of myself. I presume her experience is to be mine, unless you help me more than I fear you are inclined to.”

“ Dearest, you do not see life as I do. Now that I am married and have you all to myself, all I want is to be successful in business and have the rest of the time with you in the library. You see, for a long time there has been an endless role of fun, and loss of time to books. I am glad that I am married and free from the constant necessity of being on the go. We can have time, if we

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

will use it, to take up our studies, and what will be more delightful than a quiet home all to ourselves, with plenty of books? Of course we would expect to attend lectures and the better class of plays and operas, and then occasionally mix up with the people we know, all of which we can just take enough of to sharpen up the appetite for our home work. Really, wife, any more than this would be a surfeit."

"Robert, you are indeed easily satisfied if you have honestly outlined your ideal of what our life is to be. I think it decidedly tame. I've been used to all the company I want since out of school. I have been permitted to entertain and be entertained, and I had no thought of anything different when I got married. I fear the doctor spoke truly when he said I was no more fit to be married than a child. Between you and him, I fear I shall be convinced that I have made a mistake."

"Dearest, don't get out of humor. I must confess I was selfish enough to marry you that I might rob everyone else of you, and have you all to myself. But if this is not to be, of course we can compromise on a happy mean. You can give up a little to me, and I will give up much for you. We will let the question of doctors rest for the present, and I will see what course we will take when I have talked to my old friend, Dr. Headly."

THIRD.

DR. HEADLY'S OPINION OF DOCTORS WHO GIVE OUT ERRONEOUS OPINIONS.

THE FIRST DECIDED CLASH BETWEEN ROBERT AND HIS WIFE.

The first two years of Robert Benney's married life glided by without anything occurring to mar the serenity of the domestic atmosphere. Neither could boast of an unconditional surrender. Both had made concessions, and honors were easy. Mrs. Benney had succeeded in securing the immunity she much coveted. Whether her protection was real or otherwise, it satisfied her, and she at least thought she was protected. When the mind is at rest, sleep is as sweet on the verge of destruction as in safety.

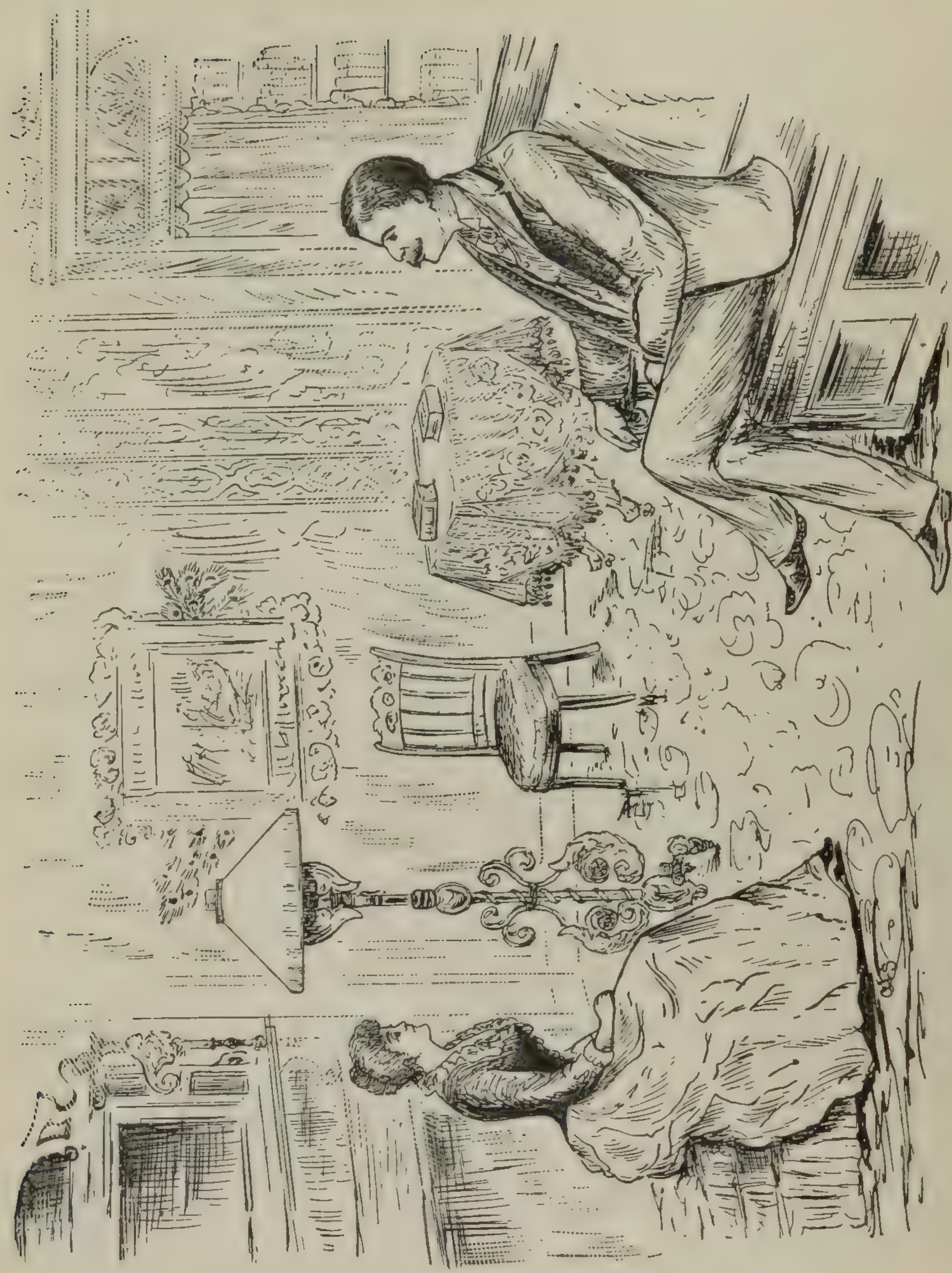
The mind has much to do with the state of health, happiness, and prosperity. Many people are ruined, so far as contentment is concerned, by imagining they are about to die of consumption, or some other disease. Pig-headed doctors often give an opinion that ruins the patient. Doctors have caused in this way far more suffering and unhappiness than they have ever relieved. This may appear an exaggeration, but I will farther qualify the remark by saying that because people get well after seeing a doctor, is no proof positive that the doctor was the cause of the recovery. I can, with better prospects of producing proof, say that the patient would have recovered sooner if it had

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

not been for the medicine taken, and I know that I can prove my position oftener and easier than proof can be produced on the other side.

There should be recourse, if not pecuniarily in damages, then by fine and imprisonment, against any professional man who gives an erroneous unfavorable opinion. I have known men sacrifice a good business on the recommendation of some physician, and cross a continent when it was the greatest of folly; either the patient could not be benefited, or the climate did not agree. And I have known some go to all this trouble when they did not need a change further than from improper eating to a suitable diet. In conversation with Robert one day, Dr. Headly related his experience with two patients, which he thinks is of common occurrence:

“A gentleman from Michigan had grown rich in the lumber business and concluded that he would stop hard work. He disposed of his lumber and other property and selected a beautiful little city in Colorado, as his home. He spent the first half year in getting settled down to his liking, and just when he had attained his ideal in every way he began to feel badly. This was unusual. He consulted a physician, who prescribed for him. He got no better. Again he was prescribed for, and still no relief. His several friends had him try various doctors, but all to no purpose. At last the physicians began to talk of ‘too high altitude.’ Doctors have a common stock of twaddle



"Well, dearest, how did you and the Doctor make out?" —Page 24.



"Are you sure you took that pin from a child's throat?"—Page 68.

the same as other people, and when they run out of everything else to say,—if they have anything else—they begin to talk of ‘too high altitude,’ and this was the very kind of twaddle this patient did not like to hear. But as he was becoming desperately uneasy he made up his mind to make the sacrifice of moving to a lower altitude, which meant much. About this time a friend of mine persuaded him to come to me. I gave him an examination, got his history for years back, and when through, the question that was all-important to him, came.

“‘Doctor, now that you have examined me, mnst I go to a lower altitude?’

“‘You can get well in a lower altitude, or you can get well here. You can stay sick in a lower altitude, or you can stay sick here.’

“‘Well, doctor, what is the matter with me?’

“‘Nothing much, only you are making a d——d hog of yourself.’

“Sometimes I am foolish enough to get out of patience with patients, especially when they appear not to have horse-sense. This man by nature was a large eater, and by practice had been a hard worker. The appetite up to this time had been balanced by plenty of out-door work, but now he had left off his work, and had continued his hearty eating. He asked me what he should do to get well. ‘Eat just half what you are now eating.’ He laughed heartily at my unæsthetic style of putting him on familiar terms with his

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

disease, paid my fee, and followed the prescription faithfully, and it is needless for me to say it neutralized the antagonistic high altitude, and he was soon as well as any man, and has continued so.

“ I don't suppose this man's gratitude, which no doubt was in keeping with most people's, ever led him to see that the beggarly fee I charged him was entirely out of keeping with services rendered.

“ If a lawyer had saved him the great loss he was about to sustain, five thousand dollars would have been paid without a word. But when a physician gets the miserable sum of a thousandth part of such a fee, he gets the reputation of being extortionate. Possibly this accounts for the poverty of physicians opinions.

“ A wealthy gentleman of St. Louis once called upon me (I was living in that metropolis at the time). He had been taking treatment from a medical gentleman of that city for six months, and as he did not get well, his physician advised an European trip, which, if he had been forced to make just at that time, would have worked great hardship to him in his business. I proscribed all medicine and prescribed a simple diet. One week from the consultation he called and settled his bill, saying: ‘ If I continue to improve for one more week as I have in the past, my European trip will be knocked glimmering. What was my trouble, doctor?’ ‘ Medicine disease. All you needed was to stop medicine and rest your worn-out stomach.’

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I am sure there is nothing meritorious in the report of these cases beyond what can be found going on in any rational, intelligent physician’s office. I give them simply to illustrate the harm that can be done to patients by erroneous opinions and prescriptions.

“I have seen patients lose their mental balance from a false diagnosis. To tell some men or women that they have heart disease, when they have not, will ruin their lives. Thousands of young men are made hypochondriacs for life by dishonest physicians making them believe that an early indiscretion had ruined them; and as the disease was imaginary in the first place, the physicians cultivated it into a reality, which, with all their chicanery (after bleeding their victims financially for all they were worth), they could not eradicate. A belief of this kind becomes a mania, and should never be trifled with. Such people are to be pitied if they call upon a dishonest physician in the first place, for the rule is that, after being humbugged, they will never have faith in even an honest physician. They will never be satisfied unless they find a doctor who will agree with them; hence the large practice quacks enjoy from these imbeciles.”

After this digression, let us return to Robert Benney and his wife. They had just returned from an extended trip. Their wedding trip had not been extensive, as Robert’s physician had advised him before his marriage not to make a long trip, for, as the doctor explained to him, wed-

ding tours are bad, and should not be taken. All first-class physicians proscribe them. The reason is that the excitement of marriage is quite sufficient for brides, without wearing them out with the hardships of a long tour. If one must be made to satisfy unreasonable custom, it should be short and finished up one or two years afterward. This Robert had done, not without protest on the part of Mrs. Benney, for she was a great stickler for "just the right thing."

"Dearest, aren't you glad we did not take all of our trip at the time of our marriage? We have enjoyed it more now by having two years to post ourselves regarding it. You did not know that Dr. Headly advised me to do just as we have done?"

"No, Robert, I did not. But I am beginning to think that you get all your orders from him."

"A safe man to take advice from, dearest. By the way, have you heard anything about Jessie since you came home?"

"Yes, I was over there, but she is too sick to see any one. Her husband told me she was very sick, and the doctor was doubtful of her recovery. I saw Bessie, who has been to see her often, until the doctors ordered that no one be admitted to the sick room. Bessie is badly broken up over the prospects. It is given out that if Jessie does not die she will be forced to undergo an operation for ab-

scence of the fallopian tubes, and in her protracted condition that would be almost sure to kill her."

"What doctors are in attendance?"

"Drs. Beeby and Dripps."

"What do they say caused the trouble?"

"They think she took a severe cold."

"My dear, you must be careful. You know you are criminally careless. I have to be always watching you."

"Robert, your solicitude is all uncalled-for. How do you suppose I lived before I knew you?"

"I am sure you have not always been so careless."

"Perhaps watching on your part begets carelessness on mine. You know it is kind of delicious to be cared for and watched over."

"Darling, you do not always act as though you liked it. You are resentful at times."

"Oh, Robert, you don't understand. That is a way I have of angling for more care."

"I wonder why they do not get Dr. Headly in consultation?"

"Everybody does not believe in him to the extent that you do."

"I don't know why. He is reliable."

"Yes, but he is not very accommodating. See how impolitic he is to us. He has not a preemption on everyone as he has on you."

"He would if they knew his real worth."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Do you know, Robert, I am beginning to be a little uneasy. I should have had certain indications the day before yesterday, and I have none yet. You know that is something unusual, and I think you had better call on your physician to-morrow and see what he thinks about it. We cannot afford to get into trouble now that we have just begun to realize how pleasant it is to be without cares. You will have a good chance to see if your friend will be the friend you make him out.”

“What do you mean, my dear?”

“I mean this: if I am in trouble he must help me, or some one else will.”

“Dearest, you don’t have any idea that I would insult him by asking him to do such a thing as that, even if we were so beside ourselves as to desire such a thing. You know that I will not agree to anything of the kind, and I can’t believe you mean what you say.”

“I do mean every word, and if Dr. Headly will not help us, some one else will.”

“You do not imagine that any respectable doctor would engage in such diabolical work?”

“Yes, Bessie told me her doctor would.”

“How does she know?”

“He helped her.”

“Is it possible? Then you had better cut her acquaintance at once. I don’t believe such influence is proper for you.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Robert, I will do nothing of the kind. She is one of my oldest and truest friends, a schoolmate and companion, and she is too true a woman to treat in that way. No, I will not, and it is more than you should ask.”

“Wife, I can’t understand such perversion. Never mind; perhaps you will be all right soon. I will call upon the doctor to-morrow and see what he thinks.”

Robert was thoughtful the remainder of the evening. It was the first time they had clashed in a decided manner, and he was at a loss to know just how to conduct himself. In his partial acquiescence there was method. He must have time, and while he had no notion of applying to the doctor for his services, he felt that his advise would be a good thing.

How many domestic ships have floundered upon the shoal to which they had been brought to-night! Some of the best seafaring vessels have gone down with as fine pilots as ever guided a ship on this reef.

Robert was wise and prudent, but his quick perception enabled him to realize that he was brought face to face with a problem which was greater than he could solve. He knew his own unwavering determination was equally balanced by that of his wife’s. He knew he was in the right, but right does not always prevail. He disliked to displease her, but in this matter he did not feel it his duty. However, the best way to oppose her was the question that confronted him.

FOURTH.

DR. HEADLY'S OPINION OF THE EFFECTS OF FÆTICIDE ON
THE HOME.

WHY THERE IS LESS VIRTUE IN MARRIED THAN IN SINGLE MEN.

After a sleepless night Robert Benney arose and ordered his breakfast earlier than was his custom, and having hurriedly eaten, left a note for Mrs. Benney, excusing himself for leaving her to breakfast alone, giving important business as his plea.

Robert had known Dr. Headly so long and so well that he knew where to find him at such an unseemly hour in the morning. The doctor, among other eccentricities, had always cultivated the habit of early rising, his reason being that he could get the benefit of three hours of study before the rest of humanity could disturb him.

As usual, he was found by his young friend in the library, with books piled in reckless confusion (to everyone but himself). He often remarked that it was against his rules to permit anyone to shelve them, for if left just where he lay them, he knew where to begin. An orderly arrangement always gave him mental dyspepsia, hence his library was swept and dusted with care to retain intact his orderly confusion. Robert was received by the doctor himself with a welcome not to be doubted, and when he offered an apology for his early intrusion, the doctor sup-

pressed it by a good-natured, impatient gesture with both hands, and clinched it by saying:

“Of all friends you are the most welcome.”

“Doctor, I knew I should find you here thus early, and I thought that, if I did not come at this hour, I perhaps could not secure an opportunity of talking with you as long as I desired. I well knew that I could not find you at any time when you were not busy, but in your business hours others would claim a part of your attention.”

“That is right, my boy. I am always busy. I want to be removed from myself when I become so I am not; for of all beings on earth I had rather not be left alone with, it is myself. In fact, it has been so long since such a thing has happened, that I don’t know what I should do.

From early life I have been busy at something. One of the first things I learned was that there is no happiness for anyone unless he succeeded in cultivating the art of self-entertainment, and I have succeeded so well that every year finds me with more to do, until now, all I long for is more time—more hours—for there is no lack of work. I was in for a good day’s work when you came, but I am glad of this visit, for sometimes I need to be jostled out of my routine. Let us not dwell longer on preliminaries, but begin at once on the subject of your call.”

“Doctor, I don’t know how or where to begin. Mrs. Benney, as you know, has had a foolish idea that her life would be ruined if forced to take upon herself the respon-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

sibilities of maternity, and now she has, for the first time in our married life, reason to believe that such is likely to take place with her, unless some means are taken to thwart nature. In this matter she is most determined; in fact, she is foolishly obstinate. She gave me her ultimatum last night, and the substance of it was that I must see you, and that if you refuse, I must get some other physician to do the work. She gives, as righteous coloring for her demands, that it is a common practice among the better classes; that it is not a hard matter to find physicians of standing and repute who make a practice of this to please their best families. I could not believe this, and I have come to you, not soliciting your services in a matter that I would not ask you to do for me, but to have you tell me if this is a common practice, and to advise me what to do in the emergency."

"Robert, you have my sympathy, but I hardly know how to advise you. I am sorry to say there is more mal-practice going on than any but professional men know. It is ruining as many homes as all other vices combined, for it strikes at the root *principle* of the home. A home without parental love cannot be imagined. The love of a mother for her child is the cohesive force that holds together home, society, nation. Obliterate this root-principle, maternal love, and the whole fabric of civilization crumbles to naught. It is nature's chiefest attribute. This evil is growing, and the families that do not indulge

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

in the practice are in the minority, and are yearly growing fewer. It is not confined to the rich, but the middle classes, and the poor indulge in it as well. It has become so general that a young physician who will not prostitute his honor will find it hard to build up a paying practice. You see my condition. I am not extravagant, and I have worked hard in my profession, but here I am, going down on the evening side of life, with nothing before me but a struggle to the last. It has come painfully near to the point where physicians must either prostitute their profession by engaging in malpractice, or spoil a fine, discriminating, professional mind by converting it into a business type, by entering into outside speculations, or submit to a ceaseless plodding along, and at the end die ignominiously in poverty. There are a very few with exceptional advantages, by birth or marriage, and some who may enjoy a college position that brings them a rich clientage, but they are so few they form the exception, not the rule.

“ I am sorry to say that some possessing the best possible advantages wink at this practice, and rather than suffer the loss of a rich client, accommodate him. These same men will make a great show at virtue, and are loud in their denunciations of the practice, knowing that their diabolical deeds are hidden behind the veil of obscurity vouchsafed to them by the unapproachableness of their reputations, and those of their patrons.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“This practice has been going on so long that we have evolved into a condition of moral imbecility, and to check the practice would be like undertaking the eradication of an instinct. To occasionally send a blunderer to the penitentiary will have no more restraining effect upon it than does the hanging of men for murder stop homicide. All the effect I have been able to see coming from the occasional punishment of blundering charlatans is to improve the technique of the great army of *respectable operators*. This practice is still in need of improvement, for a large percentage of the thousands of operations for the removal of diseased fallopian tubes and ovaries comes from bungling foeticidal practice. So long as embryoctony is here to stay, I don't know but that all legal restraints should be thrown off, and the practice permitted to be brought to that state of perfection which it can only be by legitimatizing it. Such a serious operation as it is should have the protection thrown around it that nothing but open, meritorious competition can give. As it is practiced now, any sort of mountebank is employed, and his or her skill is as highly valued as the technical skill of the thoroughly competent graduates of our best colleges. It is almost worth my reputation to suggest the annulment of all restraints, and legitimatizing the practice, for the world is used to inoperative laws, and people imagine that, with legal restraint thrown off, nothing would interpose to prevent society from at once becoming a hell on earth. This is a

mistake. The world would be better, for the more you make it impossible for people to break laws, by not having laws to break, the less criminal society becomes, and as a result a healthy moral tone would soon evolve. A legitimate and logical result of law-breaking is to bring down the moral tone.

“The demoralizing effect of breaking laws is seen in India, when the missionaries succeed in coercing the natives into eating meat or drinking wine. Loss of self-restraint and self-respect, and disregard for other laws follow, and the people become wholly unreliable. This is called conversion, and simple-minded American Christians imagine they are extending religion by giving their money to perpetuate this farce. If, instead, they would educate the natives with the money thrown away in christianizing them, and let them, when they have enough intelligence (which would be more than some civilized Christians have), select what God, if any, they desire to serve, the money would not be thrown away. I defy any philosopher to refute the proposition.

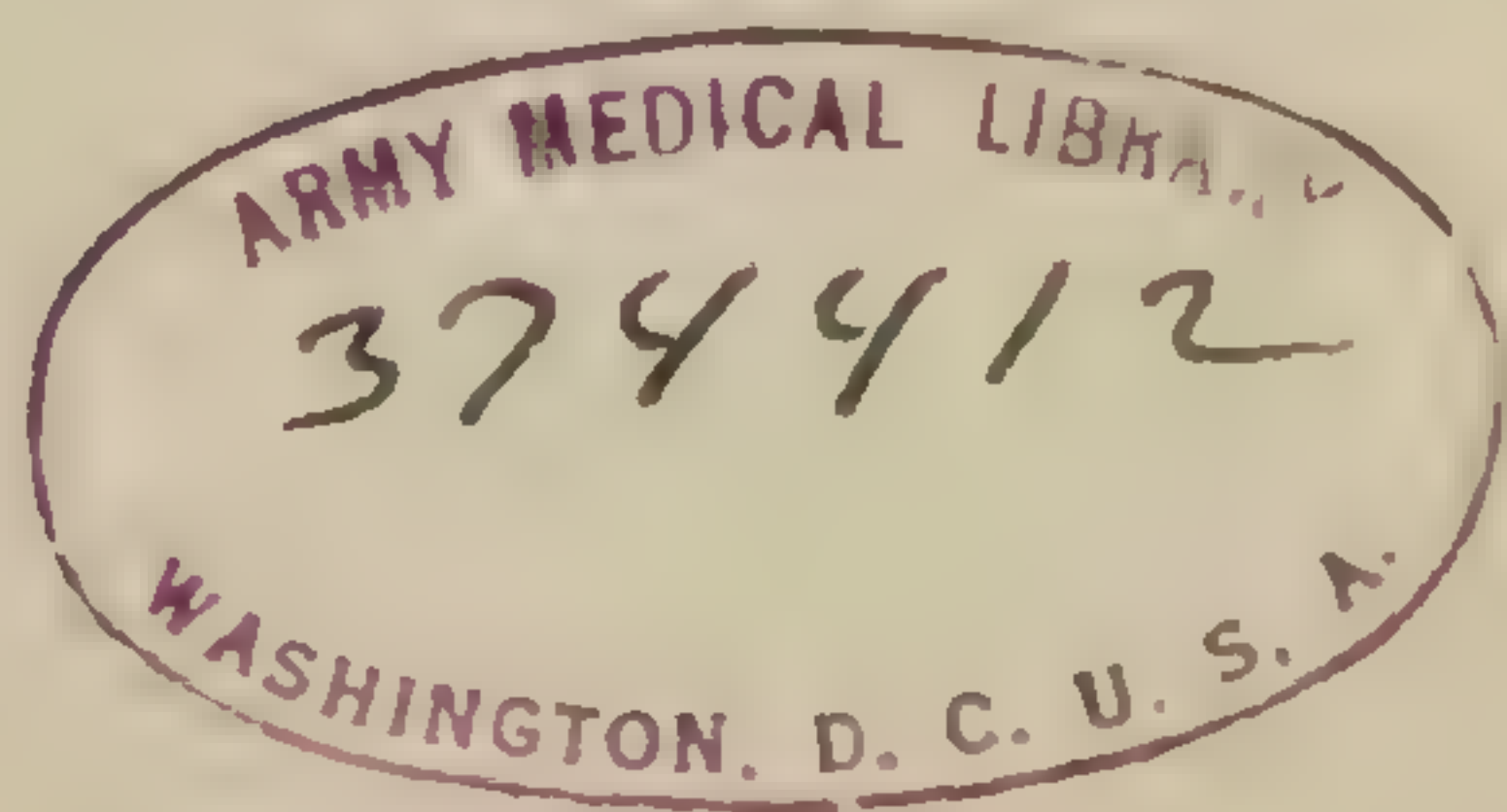
“The more you hamper a being with laws, the more impossible you make it for him to avoid breaking them; and the more laws an individual breaks, the more abandoned he becomes, This is a truism.”

“Then, doctor, you are not opposed to this practice?”

“Young friend, there is where you mistake me. Because I oppose laws, is no evidence I desire to or will

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

break them. I am simply pointing out the fatal weakness of our social system. For me to break laws, does not right them. At no time has civilization given man an opportunity to develop a manly individuality, but, like the Celestial's foot, he is cramped and distorted out of all natural beauty by an abominable hedging in on all sides. The religions of the world have environed their advocates with a set of laws, rules, and regulations that compel them to be law-breakers, and the result is a following of hypocrites and unbelievers who live a life of inconsistency. The crime of abortion does not stop with breaking the health and the law in force against the practice; it is much more far-reaching. It ruins the home by lowering the moral tone of husband and wife, to be reflected upon the progeny that may perhaps be brought into existence after this loss of tone. Following this crime, as a legitimate result, is the breaking of other laws, for a law-breaker seldom stops with one crime. I have seen women go down from this crime into the most disgusting depths of moral depravity, when I am almost certain they would not have deteriorated, had it not been for this starting-point. Men often become reckless and abandon themselves to a life of foolish so-called pleasures, when they see the woman they love losing modesty and other evidences of purity. No woman can have the right understanding of her duty when she will permit such a desire to enter her head; and, if she carries it into effect, she will have lost self-respect



CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

to such an extent that all the defenses common to a pure woman will be weakened, her self-protection unreliable. I would not say that all who resort to this practice become unchaste in the common acceptation of the term, but I do say they have less power to protect themselves. This practice works equal destruction to the unmarried. If unfortunate girls were compelled to go through to the end of gestation, it would have a wholesome effect. It is true there would be those who would get into trouble, but the number would be very small compared with those who now lose their virtue. If compelled to go through without foeticidal practice, it would have a wholesome check upon the authors of these crimes, for in seventy-five per cent. of the cases they are married men. This holds true to my knowledge among men of comparative opulence, up to gentlemen of leisure. Working men have neither the opportunity, the sauvity of manner, nor the diabolical abandon. Men below a certain level socially confine their indulgence in this vice to the prostitute, who is the wreck of the polished fiend. If there were not a chance, through malpractice, to hide their crime, married men have too much at stake, domestically and socially, to take the risk. As it is, they are comparatively safe. To the uninitiated, this statement may appear unwarranted, but it is brought about in this way:

“Married men, by an unwritten law, are conceded more freedom in their deportment with young women than

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

are single men. This being recognized as a common custom by young girls, they are not fortified against these unprincipled villians, but permit them to exercise a freedom that a single man would not venture upon. These fiendish men cultivate a blandishment of manner that is captivating. There is a certain boldness which, if accompanied by tack and skill, disarms suspicion, and inveigles the unwary into a complicated mesh, in which they flounder before danger is suspected. The school in which these destroyers of innocent virtue are trained for their demoniacal pursuit is the modern home. In these homes an expertness is attained for defeating physiological processes; prevention and foeticidal practice become an art, a science. In such homes, marriage is nothing more than legalized prostitution, and after adeptness is attained, such men are armed for conquests on every hand, and no home is too sacred for their invasion. Some men hold a power over their victims as employers, and while they do not say in so many words that a position under them is the price of virtue, that is understood, and amounts to the same thing. The atrophic-hearted, uncharitable, ignorant, vainglorious moralist will see no excuse for sacrificing virtue for the privilege of an opportunity to earn a living for a poor mother, an invalid sister or brother, or perhaps a decrepid father. The charity of such moralists is hell-cursed, and is on a par with their ignorance, and they themselves are less virtuous than the poor, struggling, unfortunate one they criticise. People

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

whose circumstances have never permitted their virtue to be put to a crucial test should not boast of virtue, for with them it is an unknown quantity. I have seen the wrecks of these circumstances, and I have met nothing on earth equal to their misfortunes. I have seen girls who have resigned position after position, until at last, forced from a necessity that would prostitute an angel, give up their all.

“This picture I am painting for you is not overdrawn, and, what is more, this foeticidal practice is being felt more and more in the moral tone of society, and, as the generations succeed each other, corruption will increase, for men will have less scruple and women less virtue. Virtuous children cannot be born from parents who are moral perverts. My advice to you, Robert, is to say ‘No’ to your wife. Do not countenance such work. Try to reason with her, but do not let her force you from a true, manly position. If it is the cause of trouble, your trouble will be a fight for right.”

“Doctor, you have given me a glimpse of a moral phase of humanity I did not know existed, except with the riff-raff; and I did not suppose it existed with them to the extent you would have me believe it does in what we are supposed to recognize as the best elements of society.”

“That is easily accounted for. Your home influences have been exceptionally fine, and my experience is that there is more virtue with young men than with the married. It is true, there is an appalling amount of depravity among

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

young men, but I have found even in this class the grandest sentiments of respect for virtuous young women; and I give this as my opinion based upon years of exceptional experience: A virtuous, sensible young woman is safer in the hands of these depraved young men than in the hands of the majority of married men. If I had a daughter who was compelled by circumstances to make a journey, and a male companion was necessary, I should one hundred times over prefer a young single man; for if she had the instincts of virtue in her, and would throw herself upon his honor, I have faith that she would be carried safely through. There is a spark of nature's honor and manhood in a single young man that cannot be found anywhere else in the world among men. It is true, we occasionally find a young man who is a moral idiot, and while I pity him, I think he should be taken care of in the same way that a community takes care of a hydrophobic dog. It would be a charity to him, and a most healthy and wholesome act for society."

"Evidently, doctor, you recognize marriage as demoralizing?"

"Most emphatically I do, Robert. The coarser evils that have grown in around this estate, such as foeticidal practice, a disposition to shirk responsibility, and, following in the wake of these perversions, a gradual decline in domestic morality, converts a human being into a moral imbecile. I know that if women understood the results of this cursed practice, and could look ahead for twenty years

and see the many hideous forms in which it will rise up and curse them, they would no more think of doing such a thing than beginning married life with suicide."

"Doctor, I know you speak from matured experience, and I shall endeavor to do all I can to avert the threatening disaster. I thank you for giving me so much of your time. I wish I could pay you what it is worth to me, and for the time it took you to accumulate so great a fund of such valuable knowledge."

"My belief for years has been that a doctor should be an educator, and I always try to make people better by giving them ideas; and when I accomplish anything in this line I make them healthier."

"Your idea is a true and noble one. I have always been benefited by your talks, and I can't see why anyone should go away from you not benefited."

"Well, my dear boy, there is a good reason. Some are born with an idiotic perception for truth. Then again, there are others who are not idiotic, but their sense perception for truth is rudimentarily formed, and they require a great deal of teaching to develop in this line; and, while they may improve, they will not be remarkable for analytical wisdom. Then again, there are those who have such strong prejudices that they will not try to see outside of their own line of thought. Sometime I will take pleasure in extending my talk to you on this subject if you will come."

"I will with pleasure, doctor. Good-morning."

FIFTH.

MRS. BENNEY'S CONSCIENCE AT WORK. BESSIE CALLED, ALSO
MRS. ADAMS. BOTH ADVISE HER.

When Mrs. Benney found that her husband had gone away without taking breakfast with her, and had not even said good-bye, she was annoyed. She could not quite understand how he could have such pressing business and not mention it to her the evening before. After worrying herself into a nervous headache, trying to solve the problem of his early departure, she retired to her room, leaving word for callers that she was not at home.

The next several hours were spent in thinking over what Robert had said to her; attempting to discover anything in his looks and words, as she could remember them, that would account for his leaving the house in the manner he did, and at last she drifted off to the conversation she once had had with Dr. Headly. Everything the doctor had said to her came back to her. "Much depends upon you as his wife." Could it be possible that, in carrying out this desire in opposition to Robert, she would discourage him and send him adrift?

The doctor had told her of the ideal home in which he had been brought up, and added that it was her duty to

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

duplicate it; that there was great danger of a lowering of the moral tone by shirking responsibilities. Many times she would stop thinking and ask herself the question, "Is it my duty to give up pleasure and settle down into an old woman, just to please Robert?" Many times the answer came, "I will not." At last she gave up, and made up her mind that she would do everything to please him. With this resolution came rest and contentment, which was soon followed by a deep sleep. Just as she was coming out of her room, she heard her maid dismiss some one from the door, and on looking out through the curtains she saw Bessie leaving. She opened the window and called out:

"Come back! I am at home to you."

"I just came over to tell you of the last reports from Jessie. The doctors are to hold a consultation to-day at three o'clock to determine whether it will be prudent and safe to operate. It seems that there is no question but that she must submit to an operation if she can stand it. Isn't it too bad?"

"Bessie, I think it is terrible. I have about made up my mind that I will let nature take its course"

"I wouldn't if I were you. Jessie was foolish in going to that young Dr. Beeby, when everyone knows that Dr. Fox is the most successful physician in the city."

"Well, Bessie, lots of trouble comes from this practice, with any and all who follow it."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Don’t be foolish, Kate; you don’t want to settle down so soon. We can have lots of pleasure yet, and then have time to gradually grow into old women.”

“Bessie, I should not like to lose my health.”

“You won’t if you will listen to me and go to Dr. Fox. Look at me. I have been to him three times, and I am all right. Dr. Fox tells me that, with care, there is no danger. Oh! Kate, I tell you he is a splendid fellow. You will almost love him; you can’t help it. It is so with everyone. He is so charming and so successful; besides, you know he has the finest patronage in the city.”

“Well, Bessie, I had made up my mind that I would not have anything done, but now that you encourage me, I will reconsider my resolution and see what I can do with Mr. Benney when he comes home. I don’t believe he will permit me.”

“That can be managed all right. If you conclude to go to Dr. Fox, you will have to be recommended by some one he knows, or he will be inaccessible.”

“Well, Bessie, I will see about it.”

“I must go. I always stay here so long when I come that it makes me late at home, and then that ‘hub’ of mine gets jealous of you.”

“Well, it is better to have him jealous of me than of some gentleman.”

“Oh! Kate, he is awfully jealous of Dr. Fox, and I just laugh at him for being jealous of a man old enough to

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

be my grandfather; but he says the age of men cuts no figure with women; the older they are the better they like them."

"For my part, Bessie, there is a little difference."

"Me too, Kate, as a steady diet. Good-bye."

"Good-bye. Come over soon—to-morrow, can't you?"

"I'll try. By-bye."

After lunch, Mrs. Adams called. Mrs. Adams had been Mrs. Benney's Sunday-School teacher, and the old friendship had never been allowed to die down. They were quite fond of each other. They had not talked long until Mrs. Adams detected by Mrs. Benney's occasional absent-mindedness, and at times vacant stare, that she was not her usual self, and said:

"You do not feel well to-day, Kate?"

"Mrs. Adams, I am not sick; I am a little nervous and unhappy. You will pardon me if I impose upon you by telling a little of my troubles. I know that people should keep their troubles to themselves, but I need a little advice."

Whereupon Mrs. Benney told her everything, and especially emphasized her great desire to keep from taking upon herself any more responsibility for the present.

Mrs. Adams was of an emotional nature, and Mrs. Benney succeeded in touching her cord of sympathy.

"My dear young friend, I sympathize with you, and will do all I can for you. You see, I have had more experience than you have had with a husband, and I know

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

better how to handle men than you do. Men are peculiar beings. They must be humored when they can't be driven. You see, your husband is determined, so why make more trouble by trying to force him to do as you like? When he comes home to-night, meet him as usual. If he brings the subject up, tell him you have concluded to please him by letting the matter drop, and hereafter never contend; always let him have his way. If he says black is white, you say black is white. If a man is so unreasonable, you cannot change him by contending. Learn to have your own way without his knowledge. You will then have succeeded in the art of getting on in the world in a domestic way. When you learn to have your own way, and at the same time make your husband think he has his, you can believe yourself an experienced married woman. If he says you must have a dozen children, you should say that nothing short of a dozen will satisfy you. Then you will have a husband who will idolize you. Men must be worshipped first, after which they make great worshippers. You have a model husband as to habits, but he may be so arbitrary that you will have to lose your individuality, or your husband, or, what is worse, your happiness. Some men can live as they please and turn their backs upon every appearance of virtue, but when they get married their wives must be as pure as they are defiled. I do not allude to your husband. I am simply bringing out the characteristics of men in general. Most of them expect a woman

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

to settle down to proasaic life, have children and worship them. They expect women to look twenty at forty, and go through enough to look sixty.

“If you want a man to be desperately in love with you, flatter his vanity by saying amen to everything he says. If he says the veriest old stick is a grand fellow, you say so too. If he says the finest-looking man in the city is gross and common, you say so too. I never go into ecstasy over my husband's best friends, for it has a sort of anti-social effect upon him. I never see the finest-looking gentleman we meet. When he thinks I have, and looks askance, or makes a remark to draw me out, I am always absorbed in something wholly foreign to his subject. My husband thinks me a man-hater, with the exception of himself. It is my life-work to cultivate my husband's love. Why should I not? He is a gentleman, holds a high position, is looked up to, and he gives me social caste. I don't see why business is not business with women the same as with men. When a man who can keep his family in the social swim, and the world recognizes him as a wonderful fellow, when in fact his home-life is as diabolical as can be made, so miserable that the house-dog hates him, the wife should become politic and set about making a business of getting on with him. Every business in life, well followed, is hard work, and this business should be looked upon as a business and made the most of. I don't see any policy in the way some women do. When they

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

find out about some flirtation with a pretty girl, they kick up a row and go into the divorce court, get possession of the children and a decree for alimony, disgrace themselves and their families, and perhaps cause the husband's income to fall off so that all will be crippled socially and financially, and before the world morally. So far as the latter is concerned, there is no morality to lose, for marriage under such conditions is immoral. This is the social conception of morality, however, and the way it is often practiced is only in the name; *per se* it has no existence.

“For my part, if my husband wants to bring and introduce his typewriter into his family, I shall receive her, and shall lend my influence to throw around her a halo of respectability, which is all she needs to put her, in spite of her honest labor, in the best of society. One popular woman can do much in lifting people up and giving them caste; besides, if the sweetheart has any womanhood, these kindnesses will generate in her a respect for me that may be reflected on the husband, to check him. Nothing saves virtue so much as dignity. Dignify her and she becomes important to herself; besides, it is a dog of a disposition that will continue to injure one after respectful kindness. If it would do nothing more, it would lend dignity to the affair for the family's sake.

“I often think of Mrs. Judge Davis, how she has injured herself without materially affecting her husband. He stands before the people to-day much as he did before.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

He has had for years the reputation of being a good poker-player and a free-and-easy man among the ladies; besides, I am told that he has no sense of honor; but this open secret does not hinder him from standing head and shoulders above any other lawyer in his district. I tell you, money counts for everything, and if you mix a little brains with it, you have the lever that moves the world. Poor Mrs. Davis stands to-day an outcast, her sense of morality and grand principles as a woman availing her but little. They fail to keep her in the social position she occupied as the wife of Judge Davis.

“I say a woman should use business tact and do as men do; never give up a good thing until sure of a better. Much of this is foreign to the subject we started out upon, but now that you are a married woman you should know some facts to counteract some of your foolish ideas. You will not find life in the realization what you expected it in the contemplation, and the sooner you get some facts into your head, the better. When Mr. Benney comes home, treat him as you always have, and never talk to him on this subject again.”

“Mrs. Adams, it seems to me that I am just beginning to find out that all I have ever been taught is a lie. People are not what they appear.”

“Oh! my child, you must not think that. You have had a false idea of what life really is. The social perversion that you see is due to the environments, customs,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

laws, and rules that govern people. People are what custom makes them. If our laws were based upon such principles as 'do good,' 'be kind,' etc., we should evolve into a very different condition. We do not do good, nor are we kind, when we permit anyone to suffer; and as long as we, as a people, permit suffering, we must suffer as much, if not in the same way; nature's laws are compensating, and they are just.

"Suppose, Mrs. Benney, the world should start in tomorrow morning and honestly establish the doctrine of truth—that none would ever utter another word that would not be truth to the best of their understanding; the time would not be long in coming when truth would be known, evil would be blotted out, for all would soon act in a way that truth would force them to act. There would be no more hypocrites; we should not be taught one thing when the teacher believed another. We should soon learn to respect all, even if they held opinions at variance with our own. The world would be free; people would be developed into ideal individualities, whereas, as it is, individuality is a lie. Everything is on a false basis. We are conformed to this state of things; it makes life a struggle, a tragedy. Truth is idealistic, and can never be brought about; and we may as well make up our minds that what cannot be cured must be endured."

"Why could it not be brought about, Mrs. Adams?"

"Because there is too much at stake. The majority of

mankind would have too much to tell of an unfavorable nature about themselves. They would not face the truth about themselves; their true lives would be so different from what their most intimate friends think them, that they could not stand the exposure. In fact, there would be few, if any, but would have a mask to remove. I must give you a little more time, more specifically upon the matter you asked my advice upon, and go."

"Tell me, Mrs. Adams, my duty. I must come to some conclusion. Tell me what to do. You don't know how I revolt at the idea of letting this matter rest as it is."

"Do you, know, Mrs. Benney, that such feelings as you have will ruin the disposition of the life that is forming?"

"I have been told so, Mrs. Adams."

"If you think you can't feel differently, I would not blast a life by giving such feelings to another."

"I feel that I cannot change my thoughts."

"Then I would advise you to end the trouble by foetocide. I will see my physician, and see what he will do, and let you know."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Adams; how can I thank you?"

"Of course, you understand that you are to keep your husband in the dark about it. It will be of no use to try to get him to consent; hence, you must take care of the affair and keep it from him, for if he finds it out, he can make trouble for us."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I will do as you tell me, Mrs. Adams.”

“Mrs. Benney, I will be in to-morrow to see you, and have all the arrangements made. Make everything right with Mr. Benney. You will find that, if you try, you can have your own way with his consent, in most things, and in other things, you can have it if you use tact. Men are largely like clay; they can be moulded into almost any shape, but it can't be done by maintaining a position in opposition to their egotism. Feed it, and life runs smooth as the sparkling stream.”

SIXTH.

MRS. ADAMS CALLS UPON DR. FOX TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
FOR MRS. BENNEY. MRS. ADAMS' JEALOUSY.

DR. FOX AND JUDGE BROWN IN A CHARACTERISTIC CONVER-
SATION.

Mrs. Adams called upon Dr. Fox as she had agreed, and found him busy, but as she was accorded more liberty than ordinary callers, she was not required to wait, but was given admittance through a private door.

“Oh? doctor, you must see me now, as I must speak with you on important business.”

“Very well; I can give you a little time now, or if you will busy yourself with shopping, or go into my library, I will be through in an hour, and then I can give you more time.”

“Would you rather have me wait?”

“Mrs. Adams, you know I would prefer giving you more time than I can just now, for there are some persons in the reception-room who are getting quite impatient from a long wait, already.”

“Well, then, I will be back in an hour.”

The patients were run in and out quite rapidly for the next hour, and Mrs. Adams returned just as the last one

was admitted to the consultation room. As this case was not important, she soon gained access to the doctor.

The doctor greeted her in a way that left no room for doubt as to the mutual understanding that existed between them.

“Mrs. Adams, is it not better that you waited? for now we can have a little social chat without hurry or disturbance. Just come to the library and have your own chair, and I will give you a drop of wine, as you look tired; or would you prefer a glass of lemonade?”

“The lemonade, doctor, if you please.”

“Here it is, and no picnic, homeopathic dilution, either; and it is just as good as if it had been ‘made in the shade and stirred with a spade,’ and cost you five cents a glass.”

“Doctor, you have been taking something stronger than lemonade.”

“What makes you think so?”

“Your hilarity; you act like a boy.”

“You know, Mrs. Adams, you always have that effect upon me. I never sip at the fount of Bacchus,” (touching her lips) “that I do not become hilarious.”

“You gross flatterer! You need not think you will flatter me out of believing that you have had something more stimulating than a little lip-nectar. What is this?” (taking a hair-pin out of the back of the chair she was sitting on). “I thought you never permitted any other

woman to come into the library, and especially to sit in my chair."

"Let me see. Oh yes, I—I removed it from a child's throat to-day, and was saving it for you to see."

"Are you sure you took that pin from a child's throat?"

"Would you doubt me, Mrs. Adams?"

"Well, what is this?" (unwrapping a folded paper that she also picked out of the back of the chair). "This is a fish-bone. Now, doctor, was it not the bone you took out of the boy's throat, and not the hair-pin? A hair-pin is rather a strange thing to get into a throat."

"Oh, excuse me, Mrs. Adams, I presume my actions will confirm your suspicions that I have been drinking something stronger than *lip-nectar* if I make any more stumbles with my tongue. The fact is I took a fish-bone from a little girl's throat, and she no doubt dropped the pin out of her hair."

"But you told me the patient was a boy."

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Adams, you are mistaken."

"Perhaps I am, but you do not operate in this room."

"Well, you see, the child felt quite sick after my manipulation of her throat, so I had her come to this room until she felt better, and possibly she used your chair. You must not be so ready to cast aspersions upon what you imagine my conduct to be, for such insignificant accidents are liable to occur."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I beg your pardon, doctor. You know it’s a woman’s prerogative to be jealous.”

“Pardon granted, as I never take to heart your little quirks. By the way, what special business have you for me?”

“I came to ask, as a special favor to me, that you take Mrs. Benney as a patient. You will understand for what when I tell you that her husband opposes it, and that, if you take her, it must be clandestinely carried out on her part. You know Dr. Headly is the family physician of Mr. Benney’s father, and of course Robert is in favor of the doctor; but the doctor will not do anything for them; or rather Robert will not have anything done, and Dr. Headly encourages him in it.”

“Let me see: Robert Benney married Miss Kate Bassett, did he not?”

“Yes, and she is a lovely woman. I want you to help her out; and don’t fall in love with her. I warn you now that you must be on your dignity, for she will not appreciate or tolerate your flattery.”

“There you go again, Mrs. Adams, jealous before I see her. Why will you forever be jealous of me? You know I am not impressionable. I have no favorites. Everything is business with me. Of all my friends Mrs. Adams stands first, and has for years. You claim my first attention and consideration, and well you may, for to me you are invincible.”

“Thank you. You are such a blarney! You have such an oily tongue. If it were not for your reverential face I should suspect you of twenty favorites, all of whom were being fed up with this self-same flattery. I shall continue to believe in you, for it is much more pleasant. Should you play me false, my revenge will know no bounds. When may I expect the pleasure of an evening to ourselves? Of late I have been unable to see you here, on account of such a lot of invalids infesting that reception room.”

“I am quite busy just now, Mrs. Adams, but I hope that before long we can have an outing. I suppose you have fully recovered from the last evening at the Casino? What would the ‘Senator’ have said if he had looked in that evening?”

“I fear, doctor, he would not have said much, neither would he have been compelled to go to Dakota for revenge.”

Mrs. Adams, I will let you know as soon as I have the leisure, and we will have an evening out. I see the hour has come for me to go; I have a case that I must not neglect longer. You may send your friend down at any time, and for your sake I will give her the treatment she desires.”

“I will send her to-morrow, and you must treat her courteously.”

It is unkind of you to intimate that I would do otherwise.”

“I beg pardon. Please arrange for that outing soon.”

Dr. Fox bowed her out, and in doing so said:

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I will with pleasure. How pretty you look in that new dress! It is so becoming.”

“Thank you. Do you think so? I am glad. I thought you would like it. I always appreciate your compliments, for your taste is so exquisite.”

The doctor returned to adjust his toilet for his dinner, instead of to attend a very sick patient, and as he was the only occupant of the office he amused himself by thinking aloud.

“By Joe! that was a close call on that hair-pin. I don’t know when I have been disconcerted as I was for a moment. It is a rather novel thing in surgery to remove a hair-pin from the throat. Occasionally a surgeon will have to take one from the bladder of an hysterical woman. Fish-bones are more likely to be removed from the throat. Where did that fish-bone come from? I will see what was written on that paper. I was frightened almost to death for fear she would read it, for I was just about nervous enough to expect anything. Hello! This paper would have knocked my explanation all to smithereens. Fish-bone taken from Miss Ada Rice’s throat, July 10, 18—. Things are never so bad but what they might be worse. Miss Rice must have dropped that paper and the bone out of her pocket-book the last time we sipped wine together. If the judge knew I sipped wine with her, he would not forgive me. I guess that must be Judge Brown at the door, as he is going to lunch with me.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Good evening, judge. Have you your appetite with you?”

“Hungry as a tiger before it will eat a missionary.”

“Well, we will be off.”

The two men joined arms and walked down the street.

“How is business, doctor?”

“Quite busy. Not much general sickness, but office business is good. How is it with you?”

“I sent two fellows over the road to-day. That abortionist, Jones, I gave fifteen years, and Wyly ten.”

“How is that judge? You gave a man fifteen years for foeticide, and for homicide ten years?”

“Well, you see, the foeticidal fiend is a blunderer, and as dangerous to a community as a mad dog. He is so unskilled in the business he professes that he is liable to be killing and ruining some one's health daily, whereas the other man may never harm anyone again, even if not in prison.”

“You deserve to be elected to succeed yourself, and I shall do all in my power to get you back into your present position. Your rational way of looking at things is what peculiarly fits you for the office you hold.”

“I myself have no fault to find with foeticidal practice, for it is the natural outcome of gradual evolution in our distorted social system. Children who are to be cursed by prenatal hate should be killed in the germ, rather than be permitted to go on to development with a blasted, distorted

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

life. I think that physicians who have not attained to a mediocre skill in this line should be treated the same as I served Jones. I recognize all unsuccessful work in your line—that is, gross, unsuccessful work—as malpractice, and one kind is as deserving of punishment as another. Regarding foeticide, look history through, and you will find that extermination of the human race in some way or another has prevailed in all ages and in all climes. Science has helped man to put down plagues, pestilences, etc., so that now, unless the people kill themselves, or their unborn children, the world would be unduly inhabited. As age advances, modes of travel improve, so that no part of the world can remain uninhabited, and for the good of those who are to occupy this world in ages to come, there should be some part of it idle, awaiting future occupancy. If the farmer wants to keep his land up, so that it will not become worn out, he must give it three years' rest for each three years' crops; and a successful farmer will not attempt to raise the same crop twice in succession on the same land, but change every year. A country will in time become exhausted, so that men will not thrive. It is a law of nature that a country must revert to its original condition to obtain the rest necessary for rejuvenation. In the nature of things, wars, fatal epidemics, floods, etc., are necessary to annihilate man, so that the proper involution may take place, to again evolute. Man may invent plans to frustrate nature, but it will amount only to a changing of the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

order, not of the result. We are so successful in checking nature's operations in killing people off, we have become so crowded that competition is sharp, making life a struggle. This struggle perverts our morals and puts us in such a condition of desperation that we turn upon ourselves and kill, commit suicide and foeticide, not from choice, but from necessity, made so by an inexorable law of nature. This being true, it might be asked.—Why interfere at all or make an attempt to regulate this evil? The inculcation of moral laws that bring about this condition necessitates a law of check, to be in keeping. We institute unnatural laws to subvert the natural, and as the result is undesirable: more laws must be instituted to subjugate those with a disposition to repudiate the undesirable; and so we go multiplying complications on every hand, and increasing the complication by undertaking to support the complication. I can't see any good reason why a prospective mother, who has lost the holy attribute of maternal love, and has nothing with which to endow a child that would be ennobling to it or to the world, should not have the privilege of disposing of it prematurely, rather than lower the general standard of humanity by inflicting upon society a moral idiot, which is sure to be the type of being this state of things will bring about.

“In guarding the public welfare on this subject, the same discrimination should be used, in dealing with unfortunate results, as with other malpractice. A reasonable

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

skill should be required to establish immunity from the law. The licensed professional man is employed to perform a surgical operation, and if he is reliable and truthful, he can't say the result will not be fatal. It will be his duty to say the chances are favorable, if they are; and if the result is unfavorable, the responsibility lies equally between the patient and the doctor; and the same rule should hold good in foeticidal cases."

"Why is not this the law?"

"Because of the superstition still in the minds of the people, also in their laws, which recognizes in the foetus an entity—a soul entity, which is sacred. I wish the time would come when the evil results of the present state of things will force society to protect itself against those beings who lower the physical standard of mankind; this, however, will not come about until the people have evolved into that condition of thinking which recognizes an ideal type of the physical, as a necessary precursor of an ideal type of mind and morals. When people are intelligent enough to recognize sickness, immorality, and perversion generally as due to physical decay, and that the only way to eradicate them is to prevent propagation by the physically imperfect, the world will be ready to evolve the ideal man."

"Judge, do you regard such a change as possible?"

"Possible, but not probable, for the defective, the perverse, the ignorant, the superstitious, will always be largely

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

in the majority, and this majority will always rule. There will always be enough of the apparently physically ideal in the world to make a flattering showing of the erroneousness of this doctrine. Look in the field of literature, and see the masses of books that are written by the apparently physically sound, who are in opposition to every natural thought. They are intellectual perverts, and they are as honest in their opinions as you or I or anyone else. They are illogical, and the construction of their brains will not permit of truth reasoning. They have power to logically construct their illogical fancies, and it takes a superior intellect to dissolve their fallacies; but no good comes from the solution, for the majority of brains are below the standard of these writers, and they cannot grasp the subject; and, as the foundation of their reasoning rests upon superstition, it is in keeping with the inherited tendencies of the masses; hence the world will always go on in the same old way. A meteoric flight will occasionally be made by a rare brain, that will promise to enlighten the world, but the flight ends, and the light goes out, leaving the world as dark as before."

"Judge, your reasoning reads like fiction, but I will say, for the doctors, that your opinions are held by a majority of the thinkers in the medical profession; but their business is not one calculated to do much towards enlightening the world. Physicians who arrive at the point of grasping the subject as you do, are established in



"Judge, your reasoning reads like fiction."—Page 76.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

their profession, and have no time for bestowing their convictions upon the people, even if it were policy to do so. If doctors were to talk to people on this subject they would lose prestige, and that means to lose money. Very few doctors go to Congress or the Senate, for as a rule they are not up in forensic knowledge, and these plums are given to your profession, who know less of *truth* but more of colloquial display. Of the few doctors who have been honored, some were patent-medicine venders and speculators, who in no way represented the brains of the profession. I believe that if both houses were represented by an even number of doctors and lawyers, much good would come of it. The doctors would make grand committeemen; good workers, but poor talkers. We have too much display; too many grand-stand plays, and not enough brain-work."

"Doctor, you have made a first-class diagnosis, and your prescription no doubt would work, as they always do, to perfection. The best lawyers in the country do not always get there. The oratorical expert electrifies the populace by his stale platitudes, and the erudite judge and sage is left in the background. It takes a light, airy brain to electrify the people, and secure a seat in Congress. A more weighty man despises the idea of orating in the most approved style, "Mother Goose, Mother Hubbard, etc., etc." All a man needs is to be loquacious, flowery, and a time-server, and he will hold a seat in that honorable body for life. If he can succeed in selling out often enough, he

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

may be able to buy a desk in the Senate, the grandest club on earth. Wind and money, with an erratic brain, are the essential prerequisites to a life-membership in that honorable body."

"Judge, I notice in the papers that the humane society has caused the arrest of that man Richards, the Christian Science healer, for malpractice, or lack of practice, or lack of malpractice, whatever or however you lawyers may construe it. What do you think of that? How should such cases be handled?"

"That being a medico-legal subject, you should render as good an opinion as I; besides, I should like to know what the medical men think."

"If left to me, I should not do anything. He is only carrying out, in an ignorant, superstitious way, what the medical profession is pretending to do in a scientific way. There is a germ of truth in their fanaticism, but they distort it to such an extent that they themselves do not know it when they see it. Sickness is imagination, and it is not, and it is both. Improper living, and every other outrage against nature's laws, with the thousands of conditions that come up in one's life to worry the mind, bring the masses into an unhealthy condition. We have more disturbances of digestion than anything else. Excess in eating, overwork, and the prostration following sexual excesses, aggravated by worry, cause most of the work of the doctors. Worry is one of the greatest factors in the production of

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

disease, and if you can make the patient believe that there is no such thing as disease and worry, that it is all due to erroneous thought, you have him cured in all functional troubles, provided the life is righted. If there is organic disease, it is different. If the patient has ulceration, cancer, stricture, or organic change of any kind, believing it erroneous thought will not cure; but it will take away the complication of nervous anxiety, which is a relief so far as it goes. In functional troubles that come from imagination, Christian Scientists often cure as by magic. It matters not what is the matter with a man, there is an element of fear and anxiety, which if removed by appealing to his superstition, or encouraging him, makes him feel better. If he can be made to believe there is nothing the matter with him, the element of fear is gotten rid of. Then if there is worry over business or anything else, and he can be made to believe that there are no worries in the world, the cure is accomplished. Anxiety, discontent, and fear, along with overwork and excesses, are at the bottom of much that the doctor meets with daily: and if the doctor has the personal influence to impress the patient with confidence, a great many of these cases are cured at once. I cure a great many by simply saying in a nonchalant manner: 'There's nothing the matter; you have been a little imprudent,' or whatever may have been the cause. 'You will be all right in a day or two; eat light and go to bed early.' A very prolific source of sickness is the systematic

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

teaching to which some families are subjected. Mothers with foolish sympathy are constantly reminding the children of their liability to be sick, and in this way cultivate a sick habit. Hypochondriacs can trace their ailments back to such environments in childhood. The most disagreeable person on earth is the individual who is forever prating about bad feelings. Such a person is always looking for death, which unfortunately will never come until every friend on earth is glad to welcome it. These people are never happy, nor do they permit those around them to be happy. There is a certain amount of mental imbecility about such people, that prevents them (after they are confirmed in the habit) from seeing the truth about themselves when advised by an intelligent physician; hence they must be put under the control of some delusion, to be benefited at all. Christian Science, mental science, spiritual healing, clairvoyance, legerdemain, etc., etc., offer the best cures for such people. I suppose, on the order of the homeopathic law of cure, 'like cures like,' it takes one delusion to cure another. These people whom Christian Science is curing will eventually wear out the novelty of it, and drop back into their original condition, until their fancy is attracted to some other delusion, and off they will go as enthusiastic as before. The whole thing is harmless, and affords a wonderful degree of pleasure to a certain type of minds while it lasts, and I for one am opposed to interfering in the matter. If people die from neglect, as is claimed,

the number will be small compared with the number killed in the regular way, and the amount of good they do will make a very respectable showing when compared with the work of seventy-five per cent. of the medical profession."

"Doctor, our views are much the same. I can't see why these people should be abused for proselyting. We all do it. Few people are satisfied to hold opinions exclusively, but all want to bring others to their faith. You mentioned the Homeopaths. They are a class of physicians that have a large following, have they not?"

"Yes, the Homeopaths claim as intelligent and well-to-do a class of patrons as any school. They have an army of sleek, well-fed practitioners, and are deserving the distinction they enjoy. When they adhere closely to their law of cure, I can't agree with them in admitting its universal application, but I have no quarrel to make with them. They have more faith in medicine than I have. They attribute cures to medicine, when I credit the same cure to correcting the life and habits of the patient. But to quarrel about this is foolish. Well-informed physicians in any school are good enough, and the better informed they are, the nearer one opinion they become. Wide differences between doctors can only be found among the inferior, and the more devoted to some particular school,—the more sectarian a physician is,—the weaker the man; such sectarianism usually indicates a man who is propped up by

his school because of an inability to stand on his own merits."

"I am glad to hear you talk in this way, for it only reflects your liberality, which means intelligence. The nearer a man gets to truth in knowledge, the broader gauged he is. Narrowness and bigotry are offsprings of ignorance, be it in doctors, preachers, or lawyers."

During this medley of conversation the two men had stopped at one of the most popular restaurants in the city and been served with the finest dinner possible, to which both had done ample justice; and then came cigars and a short stroll, which ended in time for the doctor's evening office hour. They parted with the agreement that the doctor should take dinner with the judge a week from that evening.

SEVENTH.

HOW THE PRACTICE OF FŒTICIDE ENDED WITH MRS. NEW.
DR. BEEBY HUMILIATED.

DR. HEADLY CONSULTED BY AN UNFORTUNATE GIRL WHO HAD
BEEN TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY A MORAL TEACHER.

Mrs. Jessie New was operated upon, as per report. Dr. Beeby had called Dr. Headly, with three other physicians. Dr. Headly was called through the influence of friends of the family, and his opinion was unfavorable, but he gave it as his judgment that there was no hope without an operation, and but little with it. Dr. Beeby gave chloroform, as this was according to the wish of the patient. Before the patient had arrived at that stage of anæsthesia known among doctors as complete narcosis, she spent quite a while in the stage of stimulation—the stage where some patients talk a great deal. There was nothing she did not say of an endearing nature about her physician, Dr. Beeby, and if this had been all the doctor's face might have been spared the blushes that were at times almost consuming; but she alluded to a familiarity that none, knowing either, would have given them credit for thinking of, not to say doing. She was constantly reminding him of her promise not to say anything about the operation that would implicate him, even if she should die. She would cry out at times: "Don't fear, doctor; I shall not say a word. You were

kind enough to help me out of this trouble, and it would be unkind and ungrateful of me to bring discredit upon you."

The doctor was so completely overcome several times that he was obliged to go out into the fresh air to recover his composure. Dr. Headly, the man for all occasions, remarked upon the peculiarity of some patients under the effect of the drug; how they would often talk of things they knew nothing about, and at times on subjects that, when not under the influence of the drug, they would declare they never heard of in their lives.

The operation was completed, after much difficulty in loosening up adhesion that had taken place between the intestines and the walls of the abscess. Every part of the operation was thoroughly finished, and the patient was put to bed and supplied with artificial heat to favor reaction. But it never came, and she died from shock. Drs. Beeby and Headly were the last to leave the patient, and they left together.

When they had passed out of the house into the street, Dr. Headly was the first to speak:

"Unfortunate result, doctor, but we must all go sooner or later."

"Yes; and how much better it would be if some of us had been spared by nature the farce of going through life at all."

This was said in a tone of voice that Dr. Headly's

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

quick perceptions analyzed more meaning into than the young doctor intended he should.

“All of humanity makes mistakes, but only the brave learn from them and better their lives.”

“Do you think all make mistakes?”

“I certainly do. I can't see how it would be possible for a being to be born with the curse of perverted inheritance, and go through life without making mistakes. Some learn wisdom from them; others go blindly on from one to another, blasting happiness and opportunities to the end.”

“Of course, Dr. Headly, it is useless—in fact, it would be an unjust and an unmerited reflection upon your good sense to deny my relationship socially and medically to this case. I am at your mercy. I deserve no consideration at your hands, and cannot expect any.”

“I am sorry for you. You have my sympathy. I have no desire to increase your burden. The unhappy affair should be buried as soon as possible, not, however, before you and I, and all concerned, learn the moral. If you intend to practice your profession, you must make up your mind that there is nothing in it but a living for some years yet; that short roads to success, such as playing upon the emotional nature of weak, silly women, and foeticidal practice, are strewn with thorns. Even if you succeed in evading justice, the fact that you are living the life of a criminal will so warp and distort your nature that, in twenty-five years from now, you yourself will be your worst

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

enemy. You must now take your choice between living modestly and contentedly, with a light practice for years—possibly never have a lucrative business—and catering to the people, doing their dirty work, allowing your moral nature to die, and, in dying, drag as many down with you as it is possible for a physician to take in a lifetime. This choice you must make. Brains do not count in the struggle. People have no more power of discrimination in selecting a physician than in selecting criminals from a crowded thoroughfare. The majority will select a popular physician if he will cater to their diabolical whims, and as a rule the popular physician will, or he would not have become popular. These popular fellows are very discriminating in their work. They refuse more of this kind of work than they do, partly for effect, and partly because the cases they turn off are not safe. The class of physicians who are branded by a community as abortionists are men of no character, and no one pays any attention to them unless their work is utterly gross. They get the work that the popular physician refuses, and the loudness and publicity given to many cases, with no interference on the part of the authorities, can only be explained on the ground that their moral standing is so low they are not worth noticing. Of course, if a death occurs, the bungler is sent ‘over the road.’ Dr. Beeby, you are young, and youthful ambition chafes at being held down. If you have not a love for the profession as a scientific study, and a desire to devote your life to

it as a study, get out of it; go into something upon which you can expend your energies—something that will not be as far-reaching in its demoralizing effects upon yourself and friends as is the profession. I wish you well. I believe the physicians you had to assist you in the operation are not comprehensive enough to solve the mysteries of the case so as to reflect upon you. Mr. New, of course, is a friend of yours, and is a party to the crime of murdering his wife, and therefore dare not make any trouble; his part in the affair will stand between her family and you. Besides, the family is of high standing socially, and cannot afford to risk the disgrace of an investigation. They will come to me about it, but of course I know nothing. I hope you love your profession well enough to derive satisfaction from it, without resorting to questionable measures for increasing your business; but if you do not, take my advice, and get out of it before your life is ruined, as well as hundreds of others.”

“Thank you. I could not expect as much consideration from my father. What you have said to me will be the subject of much thought in the next week or two; and then may I call upon you, doctor?”

“I shall be pleased to see you at any time.”

The doctors bade each other good-day, and Dr. Headly passed up stairs, to the foot of which their walk had brought them, and Dr. Beeby continued his walk to his office, a few blocks farther on.

Dr. Beeby was quite miserable and downcast in every way. He felt humiliated to think that his safety depended upon the discretion of a fellow-physician; that his escape from criminal prosecution depended upon a man against whom he had become prejudiced, not from any knowledge he had of him, but from a feeling of this character held by the profession generally. And why was this opinion held? "Dr. Headly is profound. He is not a man who would take advantage of a fellow-practitioner. That I have proven to-day. What is it? It must be on account of his inflexible purpose. He has opinions, and stands by them in spite of popular prejudice; and is not this the trouble? It must be. The world does not admire any but time-servers. Well, I intend to know more about this singular man."

Dr. Headly found patients waiting for him. The first one he waited upon was an old friend of twenty-five years' standing. They had a pleasant talk for a few minutes, and the doctor dismissed him with instructions to eat a little less for several meals, and drink freely of hot water for a day or two. The doctor's patients are used to getting more advice than medicine, and they have great faith in him.

The second case was a girl of eighteen years, who wanted something to remove a cold.

"You have been imposed upon by a lover, have you not?"

"I fear I have, doctor."

“Why do you not marry him?”

“He has gone away.”

“You know where he is, do you not?”

“I do not, doctor.”

“How long has he been gone?”

“About a month.”

“Did he promise to write?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What is his name?”

“I can’t tell.”

“You must. Come, tell me who he is, and I will do what I can for you.”

“Rev. Mr. ———.”

“How did you become acquainted with him?”

“By meeting him on the street.”

“He has a brother in this city. Go to him. Don’t tell him anything about this, for it is bad enough for you and me to know it. Don’t tell anyone. If you do I will not help you.”

The preacher’s brother was called upon by the simple-minded girl. He demanded that she tell him what business she had with his brother. Being a man of strong personal bearing, he frightened her into telling all that she had told the doctor. Whereupon he gave her the brother’s address, but not without a great show of indignation and annoyance.

He wrote his brother a scathing letter, which had the

effect of separating them for life possibly, notwithstanding both pinned their faith to the teachings of Christ, and pretended to follow his example.

After obtaining the address of the recreant lover the girl called at the doctor's office.

"Did you get his address?"

"Here it is, doctor."

Dr. Headly wrote a short note to the gentleman, explaining the situation—how he had exerted himself to keep the report from getting out; and he advised him to take care of the affair before the church and his friends should be ruined.

An answer came by telegraph: "I start this evening. Tell no one."

The reverend gentleman came and took the young lady away with him, and saved the church from disgrace.

The brother called upon the doctor a day or two after, to inquire about the affair, and was surprised that his brother had come and gone without calling upon him.

"Perhaps it is better that he did not call upon you," said Dr. Headly.

"I think it very strange treatment for a brother."

"Your letter to him was too unkind."

"No more than he deserved."

"You should not pass judgment upon him. Possibly he has resisted ten times as many temptations as have you or I."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“He deserves to be pilloried on the public street.”

“Well, my friend, I have none of the religion you pretend to have, but I have one thing that is good for professing Christians to have, and that is charity. I took the part I did in the case to save the church, for the church people are very much unprepared for such a nauseous dose, and I was determined, if I could, to keep the scandal down. And now there is no one to scatter this vile corruption but yourself, for if I had desired to have the report go out, I would have kept quiet, and it would have soon taken wings, to your humiliation and that of the church.”

“The people know me. How could it harm me?”

“Well, sir, it would do your church more harm than all the praying you could do in a hundred years, would do good.”

The brother dropped his head and left the room with an air of insulted dignity, but his better nature got the mastery of him after a moment, and he turned around, put out his hand and said: “Perhaps you are right, doctor.”

Dr. Headly closed the door after the brother, and throwing himself into an easy chair, let his thoughts run as follows:

“Life is a contradiction. That poor Mrs. New took the road that promised pleasure and happiness. She imagined that to avoid having a family was the surest route to evade responsibility, and that to avoid responsibility would insure ease and pleasure. What has it cost her?

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

Conscience, virtue, life. Oh! it is appalling to see the number of deaths, broken constitutions, and sacrifices of virtue, to say nothing of other evils of a secondary nature, flowing from this one cause.

“Dr. Beeby is a bright, ambitious young man. He is impatient to win patronage. He has quickly found out that women are good friends to have. If they like a physician, his medical knowledge cuts no figure. The man they champion is all right, even if he has not professional wisdom enough to come in out of the rain. The man who is the most immodest flatterer—the man who can say with the effrontery of a sybarite, ‘Madam, you are perfectly lovely to-day; you are the most exquisite person I ever met with,’ even if her own mirror has told her dozens of times a day that her face is common, she will believe, and will fall into his arms and feed upon his rottenness with the relish of a vulture. Dr. Beeby, though young, has made the discovery, and no doubt has congratulated himself upon this special wisdom. But this check will either make or break him. He will either leave the profession or skillfully fortify himself so that this trouble will not come to him again.

“That poor girl was flattered by the attention given her by her ministerial admirer. The soft words of flattery were exquisite compared with the awkward looks and words of the young men belonging to her sphere in life. She was too simple-minded to see the incongruity of an alliance

between herself and her lover. All she thought of were the sweet words spoken by him. She was made to see herself in another light. She was given new eyes with which to behold the sylph-like form she never dreamed she possessed until she met this pious flatterer. The clandestine meetings and long walks continued for a whole summer, but alas for the poor girl! the killings frosts of autumn blasted her summer of hope, and left her to solve her dreams as best she could. I hope she is happy. I did all I could. I brought her false lover back to her, and he took her away with him, not, however, to fill her ideal,—not that he said he would not, but I know it would be impossible, for it was not in keeping with the eternal fitness of things. Nature condemns such an union. Incompatibles can never be united. They may mix, but they are separate in the union. Matrimonial laws succeed often in keeping many incompatible persons together, but there is no union, simply a disgusting, unscientific mixture. This poor girl had but one shock during that summer, and that was one evening when she felt as though she would like to go into a very nice church that was located on one of the beautiful streets where she often met her lover. When she walked in and took a seat she saw her lover preaching. Her feelings cannot be described, for he had represented himself to her as a doctor. He, however, explained things satisfactorily; and why not? Her understanding was as a child's, while he was capable of filling as

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

important a pulpit as there was in the city. The reverend gentleman was doing his best to live a life he was unqualified by nature to fill. Neither church people nor his own brother can excuse him; they will hold such as he responsible for their conduct, when they probably are cursed by inherited moral imbecility.

“The brother was ready to sacrifice the church, his brother, everything, by making a public example of the *brother-preacher*, acknowledging that he had none of the charity his religion professes to practice. A preacher should be compelled to read enough of physiology and pathology of the mind, and responsibility in mental diseases, to have a rational understanding of the people he pretends to instruct. Ignorance of the church in this regard turns their so-called charity into a hideous burlesque.”

EIGHTH.

MRS. BENNEY'S FALSE PRETENSES TO ROBERT MAKES HIM HAPPY. MRS. ADAMS CALLS AND INFORMS MRS. BENNEY OF THE APPOINTMENT SHE HAS ARRANGED WITH DR. FOX FOR HER.

Robert Benney was pleasantly disappointed when he arrived home in the evening from his business, after the morning talk with the doctor, and found Mrs. Benney in excellent spirits, and the house all aglow with a hearty welcome.

Nothing was said of his early morning departure, except that Mrs. Benney, in a very sweet way, told him she was sorry he had found it necessary to go away so early, for she missed him very much, and that the day had been a month long because of not seeing him in the morning.

He told her of his business successes for the day, of the people he met at lunch, and the conversation he had with them; then came the question from him as to how their friend Jessie was.

Mrs. Benney did not like to speak of the case to him, because she feared that the unfortunate results would only strengthen his opposition to her desire, and leave her without hope of ever inducing him to change his views.

"Oh! Robert, the result of the operation was the worst possible; she only lived two hours. The shock was too great, so the doctors said."

"Oh! horrible! You don't tell me that she is dead! Is it possible? And then to think how she died! that

makes it still more terrible. If she had died an ordinary death it would not have been so bad, but to be killed! The physician who operated upon her should be made to suffer, and I shall consider law a farce if it does not take hold of him and punish him as he deserves."

"Robert, you ought not to say that. He was employed to do the work, and he can only be blamed for his lack of skill."

"But it is malpractice, doubled and twisted. Criminal malpractice to operate, and then, lacking skill, malpractice for that. I hope you will never, while we live, make a proposition of that kind again. This surely will be a lesson to us, to keep us out of such trouble. How truly this confirms Dr. Headly's advice. I am so glad that he is our physician, for if we had been unfortunate enough to have a physician of less fixity of purpose we might have been in trouble as deep as this unfortunate woman."

"Don't give yourself any more uneasiness on this subject, for I have dismissed it from my mind, and expect to do as you wish."

"You do not know how thankful I am to hear you say this. In coming to this conclusion you have removed the only bone of contention that was ever liable to come up between us. When I left the house this morning I felt that possibly we were on the verge of an uncompromising difference, for I was determined to have my way, and I was almost convinced that you were as determined to go in

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

opposition to my wish. But now I am happy to think that we are of one mind on this question. The threatened unpleasantness was of great concern to me, for in anything reasonable I would not contend with you; but in this matter I believed myself right. In fact, to have yielded to your wishes would not have been kindness to you."

"I realize it all now, Robert, and am glad I had strength of purpose enough to do the right thing when my real desire all the time has been to please you. One's friends often unwittingly do a great deal of harm by giving advice, but I shall not talk on this subject any more, and then perhaps I shall forget it."

It was impossible for Mrs. Benney to talk to her husband much about the abandonment of her purpose. She could not become enthusiastic over it; neither could she manifest that feeling of appreciation for his enthusiasm which would lead one to believe that her heart was enlisted in the subject. Fortunately for him, his great satisfaction and delight at the way affairs had turned made him so joyous that he could not detect her lack of sympathy in his happiness. An honest, unsuspecting love can and always will be imposed upon. Once permit it to become suspicious and mountains grow from molehills.

Soon after Robert Benney had gone to his business the next morning after the reconciliation between himself and his wife, Mrs. Adams called and delivered the message she had agreed the day before to bring.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“It is all right. Go any time to-day.”

“How can I thank you, Mrs. Adams?”

“Don’t try.”

“You will go with me?”

“Indeed, I cannot. Besides, you must wear a heavy veil, so that it will be impossible for anyone in the waiting room to recognize you. This precaution may not be necessary, but you might meet some one there who would know you, and then if you were sick afterward, they might make four out of it by putting two and two together.”

“And you will not go with me?”

“No, my child. It is better for you to go alone. We might be seen together. It is wiser for you to go by yourself. I have made all arrangements, and you will not need an introduction. Here is my card, which you will hand to the doctor, and he will know I have sent you. He remembers you as a child, but you have been away so much he would probably not know who you are without my card.”

“The enormity of this wrong to my husband is just beginning to dawn upon me. How can I do it when he has such faith in me?”

“This is no time to parley or bandy words. If you are going to establish an individuality, you must begin with decision. Many really great minds have gone down to oblivion from lack of decision. To delicately poise a subject till time and opportunity have flown, renders many a fine mind inoperative.”

“I thank you for your trouble and for your kindness to me. I will go.”

NINTH.

MRS. BENNEY'S FIRST CALL UPON DR. FOX.

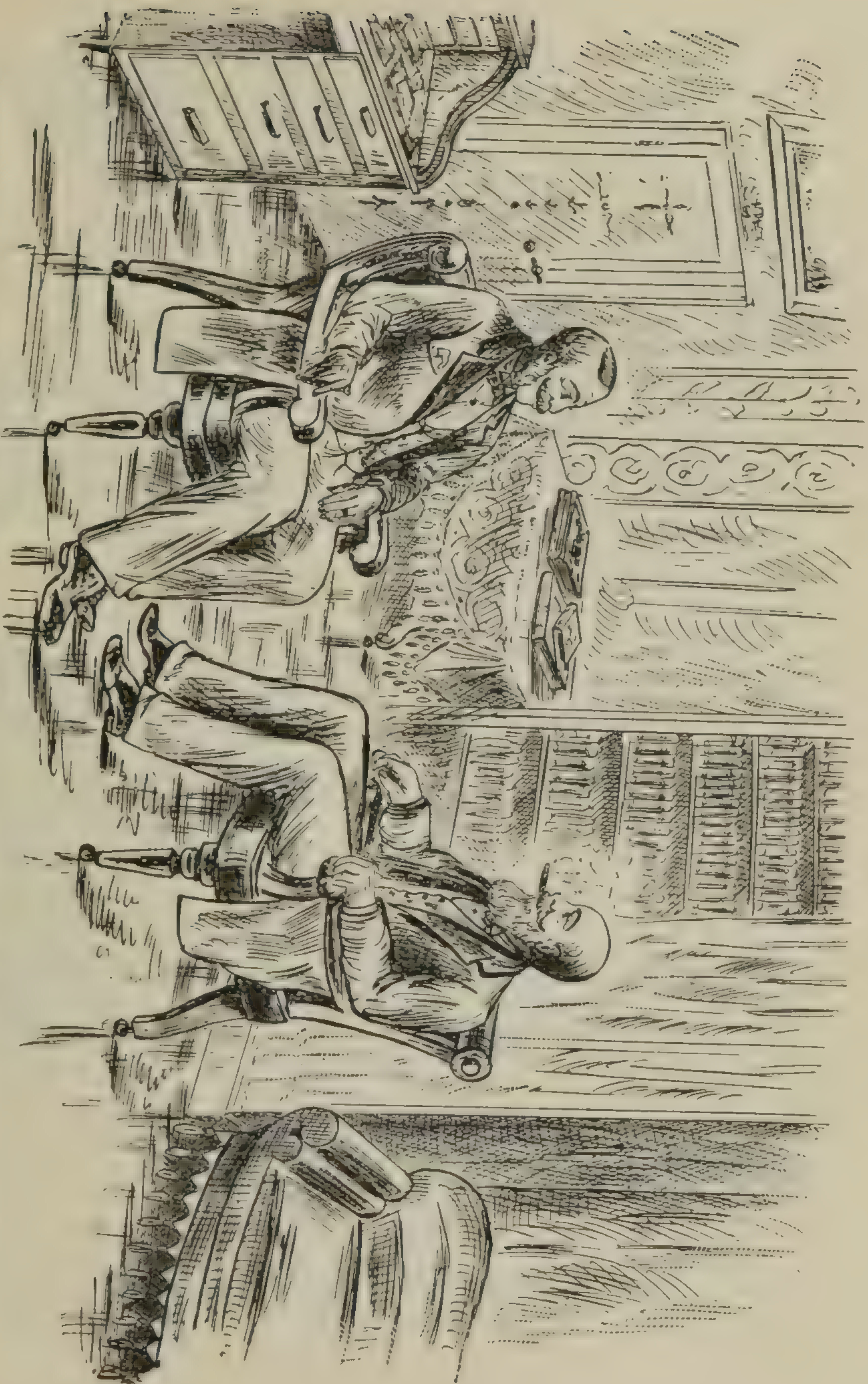
Mrs. Benney did as Mrs. Adams instructed her, and went to Dr. Fox's office. She had many compunctions of conscience, for sin to the innocent is quite different from what is to the old transgressor. How many there are who ask themselves, "What is sin?" meaning by the question, "What is sin to God?" and that, if they can by any power of imagination or reasoning persuade themselves to believe a certain act not amenable to God, they have a right to please themselves in the matter.

If Mrs. Benney could have taken out of her nature the superstitious fear that the act she about to perform was breaking God's law, a great burden would have been lifted from her. Of course she would have been pleased if what she was about to do had met with the approval of her husband, but as to conscientious scruples about sinning against him, she had none. She was doing what was her right, *God's will excepted*; and all the wrong to her husband would be in allowing him to find it out. If people could only leave their God out of the question, and learn to know that to commit an act which they would not be willing to let anyone know of is to break down their conscience

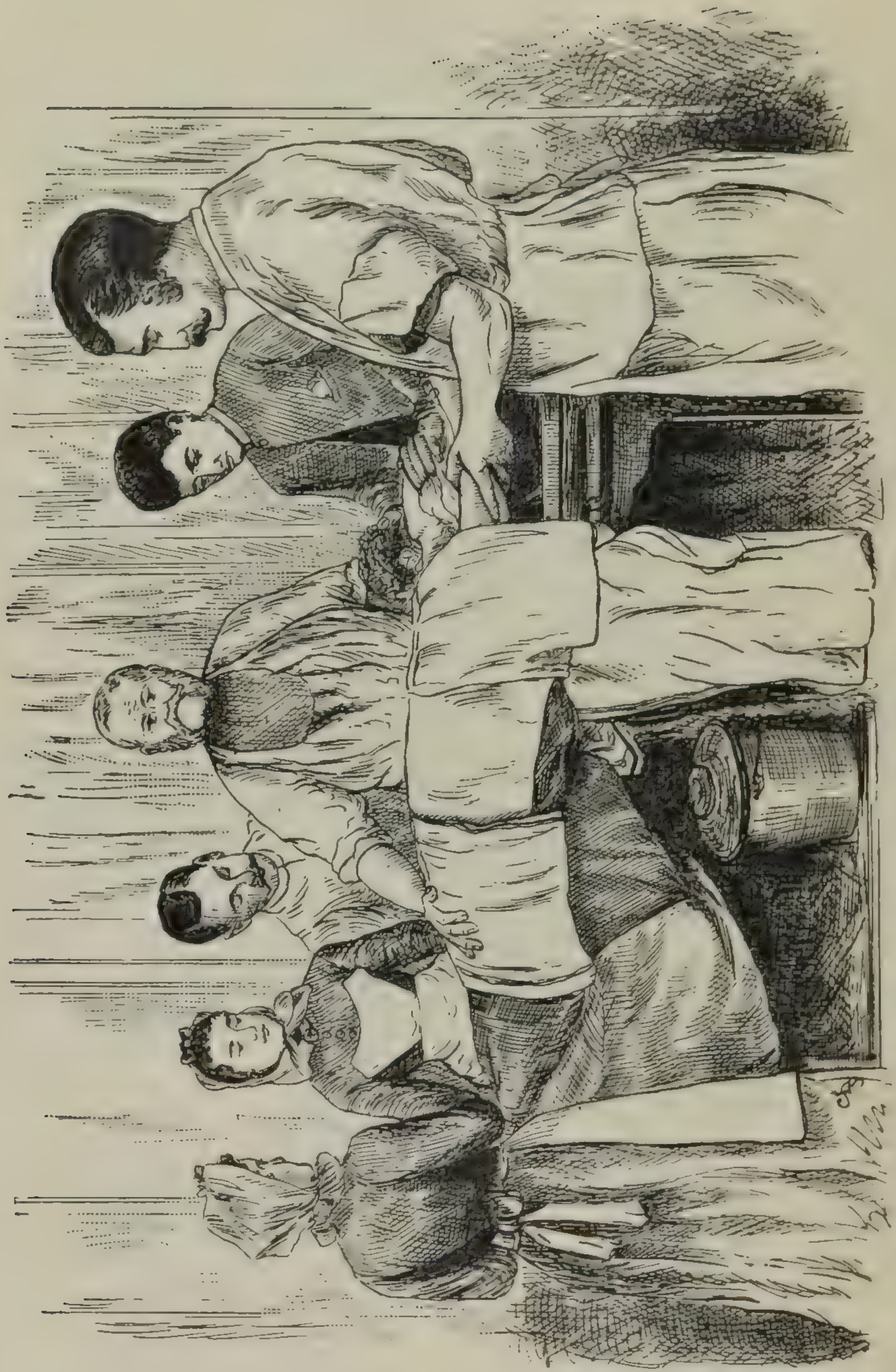
CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

and lower their moral tone more than the same amount of transgression would do for them if they committed it before God alone! Who is the reformer? Who is the one that tries to break away from wrongdoing? Always the man or woman who imagines that their friends believe them—have faith in them—love them, and look upon them in the light in which they like to be regarded. Assure a broken-down man or woman that they will be taken back into the good opinion of their friends, and they will reform much sooner than they will for future reward. It is so impossible for people to believe in the forgiveness of man, that the lack of confidence compels them to go on without change. They have no fear but what God will forgive and permit them to come back in full favor, but the actions of man daily prove that society is held in greater dread than is their God. The suicides occurring yearly prove this proposition: the fear of man is greater than the fear of God on the part of those who profess to believe in Him. What a grand thing it would be to drop theology and adopt altruism, and teach it as a religion. Such a religion would save the world. Teach people to be egotists and theopaths, and we have the conditions from which we are now suffering. I have no respect for the religion that exalts God and degrades man, as depicted in this quotation: “He that loveth Me shall leave father, mother, wife, and children, and follow Me.”

On reaching Dr. Fox's office, Mrs. Benney found sev-



Judge Brown called at eight, and he and the Doctor conversed in the latter's library until they had finished a havana each.—Page 141.



Operation upon Mrs. New.—Page 84.

eral persons waiting; but at last her turn came, and on being ushered in the private office she handed Mrs. Adams' card to the doctor, who recognized her at once.

The doctor dismissed his assistant and said:

"Mrs. Benney, I am most happy to make your acquaintance. I have known you by sight for some time. I knew you as a child. I have almost been in love with your more than commonly handsome face since your return from school."

"Flattery is something I did not come for, and as I cannot credit you with sincerity, I will not continue the farce by thanking you."

("By Joe! that's a rich spirit.") "My dear Mrs. Benney, you do me injustice. I have not had such a compliment paid me for a long as the honor of a visit from you. I assure you I appreciate it, and shall treasure your acquaintance beyond your imagination, and far beyond that of my old friends."

"Dr. Fox, you are a base flatterer, and it ill becomes one of your reputation to treat a lady in this way. I cannot give you credit with making a practice of this, and it is all the more an insult to me to think that my personal character, to say nothing of the name I have the honor to bear, is no protection against your ungentlemanly and offensive flattery."

("By Joe! talk about hauteur; isn't she grand?")
"Pardon me, I see you do not understand me. I am the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

last person in the world who would offend you. Your superb bearing unsettled me. My usual stolidity you have completely overcome. My finer sentiments have been so seldom appealed to, no doubt I exhibited grossness in expressing myself. However wretchedly I have clothed my thoughts in words, I hope your womanly instinct and intuition will appreciate my true feelings, disrobed of their unpolished expression."

"Please do not force me to question your sanity, and permit me to bear away with me when I leave your office the same high opinion and regard that your reputation in the community has taught me to have for you. I am sorry that you have forced me to defend myself against your unwarranted attack in such harsh language, even before I can claim acquaintance. With your permission, we will proceed to talk of the matter concerning which I came to consult you. Will you help me out of my trouble, and will you proceed at once, or must I quit your office?"

"Pardon me, I see you do not understand me. But with pleasure I will do anything I can for you. How far has this progressed?"

"To the second month."

"If I operate upon you, and you get sick enough to call a physician, what will you do?"

"Shall I be sick?"

"You may."

"Sick enough to call a physician?"

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Possibly.”

“What shall I do? My husband objects to my having this done, and if I get sick, I know he will not have any physician but Dr. Headly.”

“Of course you will have to call his physician if you need one. But you must be very careful not to say anything that will lead them to suspect me.”

“You need have no fear. I would not dare to open my mouth.”

“Take the chair.”

“Do I have to get on the chair?”

“Yes, Mrs. Benney; I am going to operate.”

“Don’t you give medicines?”

“Never. This is safer and better.”

“Is the operation painful?”

“Not to amount to anything.”

Mrs. Benney took the chair, not without trepidation, for she felt a mortal fear of the doctor. She did not feel safe.

The operation was performed and she was permitted to sit up.

“Did I hurt you, Mrs. Benney?”

“Not much. I was more nervous than hurt.”

“If you should not be all right by day after to-morrow, you must come back. Sometimes it is necessary to operate more than once. If you feel very bad, you must send for your physician, and if he is inquisitive, tell him you

did it yourself. He can't tell whether you did or not."

"Pardon me, doctor, I have been so nervous and worried I never thought of money. What is your charge?"

"One hundred dollars."

"What shall I do? I can't ask Mr. Benney for it. How awkward! I never thought of money, for I am in the habit of sending bills to Mr. Benney. You will permit me to pay you out of my own money, won't you? It will take a little while, but if you will be kind enough, I shall be under obligations to you."

"Most certainly I will, with pleasure. I told you I would do anything for you."

"I will pay you now twenty-five dollars, and the balance as fast as I can."

"Thank you. I will receipt you on those rosy lips."

"Dr. Fox, you insult me! I will tell my husband."

"Oh, no. You had better not do that."

"You should be more of a gentleman than to take advantage of me, now that I have forfeited all the protection I have on earth."

"Mrs. Benney, have I not proved to you that I am a friend?"

"You have placed me under obligations, but I hope to liquidate them with money, and my respect and good will. I hope you will not forfeit the latter."

"We shall always be friends. You will need me often in the next few years, and you can always rely upon me."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Thank you, doctor. I appreciate the need I shall have of you, but I hope you will treat me with becoming respect, and with dignity to yourself.”

“I shall always treat you well.”

“I can go now, I presume?”

“Yes, and if you are not all right, come the day after to-morrow. I must have a parting good-bye.”

“You are fiendish to treat me in this way. Under any other circumstances you would not dare to act so. I fear you will compel me stay away, notwithstanding I need you so much.”

TENTH.

MRS. BENNEY'S SECOND VISIT TO DR. FOX. ROBERT INTERVIEWS DR. HEADLY REGARDING THE CAUSE OF HIS WIFE'S ILLNESS. DR. HEADLY'S IDEA OF THE CAUSE OF LUSTFUL PRECOCITY IN CHILDREN OF RELIGIOUS PARENTS.

Mrs. Benney was obliged to call upon Dr. Fox two days after her first visit, as she had not experienced the desired results. The operation was repeated, and the doctor's conduct toward her at this visit was disagreeably familiar. He was profuse in his compliments, and while she did not feel confident of his sincerity, his very kind and sympathetic manner was not altogether unpleasant. He repeated his familiarity in spite of her protests, and insisted that it was from his profound regard for her. He assured her that she would be all right soon, and for her to call upon him as early as she was well enough to be out, that he would impart some information that would save her from further trouble in this direction. She thanked him, and said the information was desirable, but if she called upon him, he must promise to treat her with proper respect, which he readily agreed to.

When Mrs. Benney arrived home after leaving the doctor's office, she was feeling very bad, and by the time Robert came home from his business she was having a

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

severe chill. He was much worried to find her suffering, for she had appeared perfectly well in the morning. He busied himself putting hot bottles around her, and otherwise getting her in as comfortable a condition as possible, and then ran to the nearest drug-store and telephoned to Dr. Headly to come.

In a reasonable time the doctor arrived, and examined his patient. His ready knowledge soon discovered her true condition, for which he prescribed, and he handed the prescription to Robert to have filled at the nearest drug-store.

While Robert was gone the doctor insisted upon Mrs. Benney's telling him how she came to meet with the trouble. He intimated that she was apparently too healthy to expect difficulty of this kind, unless she resorted to some measures out of the ordinary to bring it on. But she protested that it was purely accidental,—that she had done nothing.

After the administration of an anodyne, Mrs. Benney experienced relief, and the doctor left, with a promise to see her early the next day.

The doctor called as per agreement, and performed the operation usual to such cases, and did everything necessary to prevent complications.

Mrs. Benney was quite ill for several days, but by the skill of the physician she was out in a week seemingly as well as ever.

Dr. Headly had been too long in practice to believe that her trouble came from accident, and as he had full

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

confidence in Robert, and knew that he knew no more than himself as to whom she had applied to for the commission of the act, he felt that she had taken a serious step in the downward course she was surely destined to travel.

A few days after the doctor's first call to see Mrs. Benney, Robert called at his office and asked him:

"Is it not strange for a woman as healthy as Mrs. Benney to meet with such an accident?"

"We do have accidents of this character that are hard to account for. There are many conditions that lead to results of this kind, and where it is possible, it is well to find the cause, so as to avoid it in the future."

"Dr. Headly, have you an opinion as to the cause?"

"I don't know that I have. Such things come during the first years of married life, through lack of continence, especially after conception."

"This cannot be, for I have been strictly continent since I had my first suspicions of her being *enciente*, because I have imbibed the belief, from reading, and from hearing you talk, that such acts should never be indulged in during that period, unless one would impart a lustful nature to the offspring."

"You are right, my boy. If every man and woman would realize and act upon this truth, quite a different race of people would soon follow. Some men are worse than brutes. I have known of men who pretend to be intelligent, who consider themselves civilized, who will become

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

offended and abuse their wives if they object to this immoral *liaison*,—even threaten to be disloyal. These demoniacal fiends runsack hell to find as diabolical attributes as possible to impart to their unborn, and then, in the blandest possible way, express surprise at a son or daughter for going astray, when they have so lavishly spent thousands of possibly ill-gotten dollars upon their education, and in keeping them in an atmosphere of purity. You might just as well expect wheat to grow from tares as to expect a proper person to spring from such prenatal influences. A man who will torture a wife with threats of illicit indulgence is already an abandoned libertine, and is simply, coward-like, seeking a miserable makeshift of an excuse to ease his corrupt mind, by attempting in a villainous manner to shift the responsibility. Such sensual monsters advocate the idea that, to have life and health, it is necessary to debauch one's-self sexually; that every man should be a polygamist, or, in lieu of wives, have mistresses; that one wife is not enough; that continence is opposed to the greatest health standard. This is the foulest lie that the young men of our time can have inculcated in their minds. It is true, sons of such fathers are sexual perverts. They develop into sexual precocity, and, with inherited moral imbecility, soon begin to suffer from excesses of a venereal order, such as self-abuse, excessive mental outrages of the order of lascivious thought, with day and night dreams of the same unholy sort. Some of the worst subjects I have

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

ever seen have been minister's sons, for they are cursed with the lustful inheritance and brought up in an atmosphere well calculated to feed the lustful imagination, without the unlawful gratification that comes to boys under less of moral restraint. These are the most pitiable subjects that come to a physician. They are debauched mentally; they are moral libertines; the system is wrecked by their impure thoughts and self-abuse; they are as impure as it is possible for them to be, and they have been guilty of every excess save the one of illicit venery.

“Many young men are born with moral surroundings; have parents who belong to church and fill the requirements of moral society; but they inherit moral imbecility to the extent of developing into this horrible sexual condition; they are as impure in their minds, if not more so, than the young man who is under immoral surroundings, and have not the moral restraint.”

“Doctor, I don't quite get your meaning. You do not wish me to believe that it is a disadvantage to be brought up under moral influences?”

“No, and yes. We use the word moral sometimes in the place of religious, and you know that a man can be religious and not moral. I wish to convey this idea; some religious people are impure in their minds, and in their domestic lives they are as libidinous as the people who do not make pretensions to religion. They succeed in living a double life. Their children are begotten in lust but are born

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

amid environments of a religious character; as they grow into maturity they develop the lustful from their inheritance, and the moral restraint only holds good as far as their outward actions are concerned. They appear to be what they are not. Their minds are as corrupt as those under less moral restraint, for the mind, with its morbid imagination, is never satisfied with experience. On the other hand, the morbid imagination is relieved by putting it to the test. There are fathers with such fiendish ignorance they will put money in their sons' hands, with instructions to spend it debauching themselves in bawdy houses, and I cannot remember in any single instant when such parents were not believers in some religious dogma. In these cases while the mind is relieved, the excessive indulgence dwarfs and perverts until there is very little choice between the two types of beings. From such examples as these, the erroneous reasoner comes to the conclusion that venereal satisfaction is necessary. Its gratification is, however, as necessary, and no more so, than the gratification of the morbid desires of the kleptomaniac or the dipsomaniac; and the unfortunate victim is just as responsible."

"Doctor, I enjoy this information you are imparting to me, and would like to hear more, but as I have not long to stay I should like to have your opinion at once as to the cause of my wife's trouble. Do you have any idea that there has been anything criminal about it?"

"Robert, how can I know? She says she did nothing."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I can come to you with my troubles when I would not go to my father, and I believe you will not abuse me by not giving me the benefit of your knowledge. I may be able to throw a little light upon the case, and then you can have a better idea. When Mrs. Benney was quite sick the other day, and was under the influence of the morphine, Mrs. Adams, an old friend of her's, called. I permitted her to sit with my wife for a while, and Mrs. Benney talked a great deal. I thought she was bordering upon delirium. Mrs. Adams requested me to go and lie down (as I had been up all night), and get a nap, and she would sit with her. I did so, and while I was lying down I heard my wife say: ‘Mrs. Adams, I am so thankful to get out of this trouble. You don't have any fears but what I will come out all right, do you?’

“Mrs. Adams then talked so low I could not hear anything she said, and when she had finished, Mrs. Benney answered: ‘Don't fear. I shall not say a word. The doctor asked me, but I told him I had done nothing.’”

“There is nothing in this conversation to excite suspicion. Mrs. Adams did not talk loud for fear of disturbing you, and perhaps she was trying to keep your wife from talking loud for the same purpose. Mrs. Benney's answers may have been a little wide of the mark—a little far-fetched, for morphine often makes one talk at random.”

“I hope everything is all right. I should not like to know that my wife has played me false.”

“I don’t think there is any danger of that, Robert; don’t borrow trouble. It comes fast enough when we are not looking for it.”

Robert took a prescription and left the office, feeling better on account of the doctor’s interpretation of the conversation. It is easier for people to believe what they want to believe, and Robert did not want to believe anything wrong of his wife.

After he left the office, Dr. Headly fell to musing, as was a common thing for him. “I see it all. Mrs. Adams is a close friend of Dr. Fox. ‘Mrs. Grundy’ has associated their names together for years in choice bits of gossip, but on account of the high social position of both, the scandal has passed, as is customary under such circumstances. In a professional way I have been aware of the fact that Dr. Fox performs abortions for the best families, as a means of holding their patronage, and no doubt Mrs. Adams has induced him to help Mrs. Benney out of her trouble. How impossible it is to keep thought from being interpreted! People think they commit a crime in the most profound secrecy, and that by strict precautions they can keep it from the public; but thought cannot be obliterated. It will come out. Mrs. Benney has a secret, How long will it take Robert to absorb it? He really knows it now, but is fighting against the knowledge. Little by little it will gain the mastery of him. How many of these secrets of life are mutely absorbed by people coming in contact with

each other! There may never be enough tangible proof to admit of the knowledge taking the form of words, but one's whole being knows it, and knows it so well that it is a source of pain and distress to the interested party. No one ever has a secret that a companion will not absorb and know. This is probably thought transference. How many thousands die with what they suppose is a profound secret concerning themselves, when the truth is, the secret has been known for years by their best friends! This unwritten and unspoken knowledge is the cause of much trouble in the world. Much unhappiness and jealousy in families come from the absorption of a knowledge of secret 'skeletons in closets,' whereas, if the knowledge were not in the mind as a real existence, life would be a continuous pleasure. Now that she has taken this step, she will go rapidly. I am sorry for the boy, but I shall not enlighten him. He will find it out as fast as he can become accustomed to it. It is best for people to come into disagreeable knowledge gradually, for then the shock is not so great."

ELEVENTH.

MRS. BENNEY ARRIVES AT THE CRITICAL PERIOD OF HER LIFE WHEN SHE MUST DECIDE WHETHER SHE WILL TAKE UPON HERSELF LEGITIMATE RESPONSIBILITIES, OR SACRIFICE HER WOMANHOOD. DR. FOX'S FREE-LOVE PLEA. DR. FOX EXPLAINS WHY THE FIEND WHO DEBAUCHES THE SOCIAL VIRTUE IS ALLOWED TO THRIVE UNMOLESTED.

Mrs. Benney recovered rapidly from her illness, and did not call upon Dr. Fox again until some weeks after her sickness. She had alternate desires and misgivings about ever visiting the doctor again. The promised information was desirable; besides she must go and pay a part of her bill. At times she thought her duty would be to send the money by Mrs. Adams, and never call again. Still, his friendship was desirable, for she might need his services again. She felt that she could have no hope that he would not treat her as he had. Her mind was made up several times to go, but duty gained the victory, and the visit was abandoned. At last she placed in Mrs. Adams' hands a sum of money to be taken to Dr. Fox, and made up her mind that she would not go again. Mrs. Adams gave the money to the doctor, and returned a receipt with a sealed note, which read as follows:

"My dear Mrs. Benney:

"I am greatly disappointed in not seeing you before this. You are ungrateful to treat me as you do, when I have done for you what I have. Perhaps you think you will not need my services again. I hope you will not, for I could not feel it my duty to do anything for you when I am treated simply as a convenience.

"Most respectfully,

"DR. FOX."

Mrs. Benney read the note and felt its full meaning. She must either abandon herself to her fate and take chances on marital uncertainties, or cultivate the doctor's favor. She felt that her late experiences had lowered her self-respect, and to continue her visits to the doctor would probably tend more and more to lower her moral nature. There were two roads to take, and both were disagreeable. It was a question as to which was the worse. After pondering over the affair for several days, she decided that, come what would, she would not be tied down with a family. After coming to this conclusion, she called upon the doctor. She found him in his office, with no patients waiting. The doctor was delighted to see her, and as usual complimented her upon looking so charming.

She told him why she had not called before,—that she did not feel that his treatment of her had been proper, and she felt that it was an injustice to herself and her husband to continue her visits.

"Your husband has no claim upon your consideration, when he will not do all that he can to please you. As beautiful a woman as you are should not be forced to sacrifice her youth and beauty by taking upon herself the charge of

a family. Your husband should idolize you. Every wish should be a pleasure to gratify, and he should find delight in keeping you as fresh and young as you are now."

"My husband is a good, kind companion, and he humors me in everything but this. I am not worthy of him."

"My dear Mrs. Benney, you undervalue yourself. You are deserving of all you ask. Cranks think young wives should make old women of themselves. I say no. We cannot have youth but once, and it is a woman's right and duty to stay young as long as possible."

"Every man does not see as you do, doctor. I should be so happy if my husband had opinions like yours."

"Inasmuch as he has not, I see no other way but that I will have to become your protector, and help you to get along without your husband's help."

"It is not right for me to enter into such a compact with you, but if you do not help me, I do not know anyone who will."

"You may trust me. I will do all I can for you, and no one will be the wiser. Of course no one is to know of this arrangement but you and me. You are not to say a word to Mrs. Adams about it."

"All right, doctor. I will trust you."

The doctor had conducted Mrs. Benney, when she first came into the office, to his private library, had excused himself, gone into his waiting-room, dismissed his bell-boy,

and left on his annunciator a note saying that he would be out the rest of the evening.

“During the conversation the doctor had been sitting in an easy-chair, facing Mrs. Benney, but when the conversation became confidential, he had stood before her for a while, and at last, in the most polite and confidential manner, seated himself beside her on a low divan, which she had been occupying since she came in. At this she showed uneasiness, but in a very assuring tone he smoothed away her agitation, and had, in his invincible manner, gained her confidence. She was beginning to feel that he was more interested in her than anyone else, and that she had been unjust in her estimate of him. His little familiarities appeared so nonchalant that she had become reconciled to them, and looked upon them as a peculiarity of his. He explained to her how it was the custom of influential physicians to pet and caress their patients; that it was remedial, and that doctors of a cold and stern nature often failed to relieve.

“Thousands of our patients are benefited by a kind, sympathetic word, and to caress under such circumstances often carries a cure. The world is so devoid of sympathy and love that people starve for it. I see women who are sick from no other cause. Women have natures that do not thrive well except in an atmosphere of love. Women must not be crossed in their desires, for it withers them and they grow old. They were made for man’s luxury,

and should be loved and cared for as the greatest luxury. As beautiful a woman as you are has everything to compel a man of the proper construction to idolize (and that means love) and to live and labor for."

"I fear, doctor, you would spoil all the women."

"They can't be. The more they are petted and loved, the sweeter they are. I love you, and will pet you just the same as if you were mine."

"You should not be so demonstrative, for you must remember I do not belong to you."

"You do belong to me. Have I not said I am to take care of you?"

"Yes, but I belong to another."

"In the face of the law you belong to another, but according to the law of nature, you are mine. We are bound by natural affinity (which is stronger than man's laws) to each other. If nature did not sanction our union we should know it, for we should be repellent to each other. As it is you yourself can see that we are drawn together in mutual sympathy. In nature's order affinities only come together. In man's order, repellents are bound together, to curse each other while they live, and often with nothing in common "

"Doctor, you force me by the logic of your reasoning to exonerate myself for this very imprudent conduct on my part. I never have known what sympathy was. My mother kept me in school, and I never felt that sympathetic

touch which girls talked of as existing between their mothers and themselves. It has always appeared to me that there were no very close ties existing between myself and the world. I have felt that I was not so complete an isolation since I have been married, but I see with my eye of perception, after the hints you have thrown out, that my dear husband and myself are not in the closest touch with each other. He is a grand, good fellow, but we have not many thoughts in common."

"Just so. If you were joined agreeably to nature, your wish would be his law, and his wish would be your law. If your life was full, you could not find nourishment from anything I might say. You are formed in the perfect manner you are, to charm and fill some life so full that there would be nothing lacking. You are also endowed with that gift that I recognize as the capping climax of an ideal woman—your robust, voluptuous nature. Were you suitably mated, your pleasure in your married life would be so exquisite it would baffle a Milton's description. Do you know that the majority of the people in the world go through life and never know the legitimate pleasure that truly belongs to them, on account of an incompatibility in their marriage relations?"

"I don't exactly understand you."

"I mean this: There are married people whose pleasures with each other are almost nothing, while there are others who experience an enjoyment that leaves nothing to

be wished for. Their lives are perfectly full. They are sufficient unto themselves, and there is no wishing or longing for something, they know not what, only they know there is an emptiness—a lack of something. There are others who experience something on the order of a repulsiveness; and the curse of it all is, that our social system looks upon these (nature's demands) as a great wrong, a sin. We may just as well say that gravitation is wrong."

"I think I understand you."

"What do you think of my ideas?"

"What you say appears reasonable. Of course I can't have much of an opinion either way."

"You will admit this, at least: you like me better than you did when you first came to see me?"

"Yes, doctor, I will admit I do, for I thought you very ungentlemanly."

"You do not now?"

"No, I have great respect for you, and can trust you, and I recognize you as my best friend, I believe you understand me better than anyone else does, and I am sure you have more sympathy than anyone else."

"Well, I want you to understand when I tell you I love you, that I do."

"I believe that you respect me, but you do not love me. Besides, you have no right to love me."

"Right has no part or parcel in this affair. I have not the commanding of my likes or dislikes; they are a part of

me. Love and hate know no laws. We like and dislike, love and hate, as we must, not as we will. I simply love you; I have no volition in the matter. If your feelings for me are so-and-so, you have nothing to do with it. Nearly every belief we have in a social way is contrary to nature. Everyone recognizes the beauty of truth, yet our business and social customs are in such a perverted condition that the commonest thing is to misrepresent. Take it in your case. You are a young inexperienced person. You should not know anything about falsehood. But the environments of your life have placed you in a position where you must either live a life you detest, or a life the antipode of our highest ideal—truth. The world teaches morally and practices the opposite. Our code of morals teaches that we should love the good and shun the bad. Yet in formulating the good and bad, we all love the bad and loathe the good. Everyone has the right to life and the pursuit of happiness. Yet, when we start in life, the chances for the continuance of life are against us. There are more chances for our extinction than for our continuation in life. Our perverted style of living surrounds us with casualties innumerable. Then as regards happiness, we meet with opposition to our desires on every hand. The thing that will make us happy is invariably the very thing that custom makes bad for us. We are started in life in opposition to our surroundings, and, as we continue, the opposition increases, until at last we either repudiate the

governing code as false, or recognize it as true, and lose all self-respect by ignoring it. The majority of sticklers for its consistency live in secret rebellion against it, and represent just so many hypocrites. My opinion is that we should live as we please, and get all the pleasure we can out of life, so we do not injure anyone else."

"Don't you think my actions in coming to you as I have, and doing as I am now, in permitting you familiarities that you have no right to indulge in, nor I the right to permit, is doing my husband a great wrong?"

"It would be a wrong and an injury if he knew it. Hence, the wrong will be in letting him know it."

"You are a strange reasoner. I fear your influence is bad. I do not understand, myself, why I stay here listening to you talk when your arguments are all in opposition to my sense of right, as I have viewed matters heretofore."

"I understand it. Nearly all young people are brought up in an atmosphere of superstition and false reasoning, and they are permitted to form opinions that every day of experience forces them to abandon and recognize as false."

* * * * *

"Doctor, I am surprised at myself. I can't believe this is me. Have you hypnotized me? I surely am not myself? I can't realize that I am myself? Would you be so devoid of manhood as to take advantage of a defenseless woman, when she cannot defend herself, and has forfeited

every protection? I have depended upon your honor as a gentleman to protect me.”

“According to the reasoning you base your interrogations upon, I will say, I am no gentleman. For gentlemen will not be engaged in the business you came to me for. Besides, a lady will not ask a gentleman to engage in a practice that makes him a criminal. The facts are, we are on an equal footing. You asked me to break the criminal law. I insisted upon you breaking the moral code. My demand is recognized as less criminal than yours before a bar of justice, hence I am the lesser offender. I do not see the consistency; people with impunity ask me to perform a criminal act for them, and if I refuse I am to suffer in a business way, which affects me indirectly in a social way; and then to put them on an equality with myself, I ask them to commit a crime against the moral law, which before the law is a less offense for them, than the one they asked me to commit.”

“Dr. Fox, you are guilty of outraging an unprotected woman. How can such a fiend as you succeed in keeping up a reputation? Why do not respectable people find you out and blast your reputation?”

“For the same reason that you will not.”

“This moral wreck you see so artfully concealed under this guise of a gentleman—this wreck of which even the pen of the most erudite word painter palls in an attempt to portray its hideousness; you may not believe me, was

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

once pure an innocent, with high aspirations, but is now a fiend that the arch-fiends worship. Perhaps it will not be of interest to you to know how this transformation has taken place, but inasmuch as I owe it to myself to partially exonerate my actions, I will relate to you how it came about, even if I do so to unwilling ears.

“I was a poor, struggling young physician, ambitious and determined to succeed on merit. I put all my spare money into books, instruments, and lectures. I found that with all the knowledge I gained, I was unable to cope with those who, I was conscious, did not know as much as I did. I made a desperate effort to solve the secret of their success over mine. I was satisfied that it was not due to their superior skill. In my investigation I had a talk with a very worthy but unappreciated physician of this city, Dr. Heady. He had solved the problem, for he is a man of deep penetration. I asked him how it was that a man of his knowledge lagged behind men of less knowledge. He answered me something like this:

“‘They have more tact. They spend more time in currying favor, and they make it a business to accommodate people by catering to their wishes. Criminal practice keeps many from starving, and helps many into a lucrative business. A physician without money or influence must resort to pleasing the people in this matter, or his chances are very slim for growing a business. Some follow this practice until they become established, and then draw out

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

except with a favored few, and then turn state's evidence, and are loudest in their denunciation of those who are doing just as they have done. The abortionists who do the real harm to society are not the men who are known as being engaged in it. The class of business that goes to the professional abortionist will not be accepted by the private operator, for it is not safe. They do a strictly family business, and while it leaks out occasionally, there is no one to prosecute. In fact, the standing of the family gives safety and protection.'

"At the time of this conversation with Dr. Headly, I was in great financial distress. I did not know where the money was to come from with which to pay office rent. I was behind so far that I had been given one month to look up another office. I left the doctor, and on my way to the office I resolved that if I could not make an honorable living, I would make it in a dishonorable way. I gave the subject close study for several days, for I knew that if I was to make a success of it I must be an expert. How well I succeeded my reputation shows. The first person to consult me was a member of one of the leading families in this city, prominent in church and social circles. I did the work, and so successfully, the family has employed me ever since. I received enough as fee to pay up all back dues, and have never known since what it was to be out of money or friends. I have received as much as five thousand dollars for one case. The parties were well connected. The

lady was single, and belonged to one of the wealthiest families; the man was highly connected in marriage, and it was necessary to hush the disagreeable affair up, which I did, and to-day no one is any the wiser. The young lady was married since, has a family, and fills a high social position. It was necessary to obliterate all traces of the indiscretion by a delicate surgical operation, but it was nicely done, and results were all that could be asked. While I was well paid for my work, I have been still better paid in the satisfaction of knowing that I was able to save a lovely woman from a life of social ostracism. Her husband worships her, and she deserves it, for she is his superior in every respect. My income from this practice has been more than from all the other work combined. I have turned thousands off, for they did not have the social standing to protect me if any accident should happen. Living as this life has compelled me to live, in opposition to law and order—sniffing corruption—seeing the hypocrisy and utter falsity of life as it is lived, has slowly but surely drained all that was moral from my nature. All the satisfaction I have is in planning the wreck of those who wrecked me. People who employ me to do this work, will, after it is over, get to thinking that I am a criminal, and they exonerate themselves by shifting all the responsibility upon me. If I place them on a par with myself, they cannot turn against me, and if popular opinion, which is a fickle goodness, should happen to turn against me, I

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

can depend upon them, as my victims, to support and hold me up. For, if I go down, they go with me. Years after people have been criminals, fortune may place them where it would be a great thing to have a clear record, so they could lord it over the world; but their records hold them down and make them concessionists. I have related the cause of my fiendishness in extenuation of my treatment of you. You, no doubt, think me a fiend, which I am, but it was such as you who made me what I am. I am what I am from force of circumstances. I am no worse than my patrons, and my patrons belong to the best in the city. You have learned from me that people who desire foeticide are moral perverts, and that all they need to draw them farther and farther into moral depravity is the opportunity and the pressure necessary. I want you to think it all over, and see if I am worse than you. Also, weigh well all the circumstances that brought you here, and see if you can't discover that your desire for cheating nature was stronger than your desire to maintain your honor. And, if you can, do not blame me, nor yourself, but remember that you have inherited your weakness and tendency to perversion. We can rise no higher than our source."

"Doctor, do not add insult to injury by reflecting upon my parents. If I am naturally immoral, don't blame my people."

"I insist that all the natural immorality in you comes from your people. I know what I am talking

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

about. One thing I do know: your mother would not have a family, and if it had not been for Dr, Headly you might have been cut off in embro."

"It would have been a blessing."

"Perhaps it would. You got your dislike of the responsibility of a family from your mother. Possibly I am prematurely enlightening you on subjects of heredity, but you may as well know them now as to come into the knowledge more slowly and later on. I talk plainly to you, not that I do not respect you, for I do. But our relationship from now necessarily will be, must be, the most cordial and frank, but you, from lack of experience with the world, will require many hints from me to make you understand yourself and others, and see life as it is. You pretended to be grossly insulted—you thought you were—your education had prepared you to believe you would be insulted if approached as I approached you. And when the time came, you acted your part. But what a farce! Not that you intended it to be, for you were as honest as your nature would permit. You knew your danger before you came, but that element of rebellion in your nature (that has been latent so long) to uncongenial, unassimilable requirements and environments, forced you to the sacrifice of virtue, to free yourself from the possibility of uncongenial happenings. You did not reason it out in this way, for we only reason in the line of our desires. The logic of opposition is what we all hate, and persuade ourselves to believe it false.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

You, like thousands of others who belong to the best society, are cursed with moral imbecility. You were born in this way. You are a beautiful animal, and have been groomed into a condition that represents in society all that any society critic can ask by way of æstheticism. Your morality is unique and satisfying to demands, and your virtue safe to all approaches, unless it is to sacrifice it for freedom from responsibility and care.

“Show me a woman born without the fundamental principal, love of offspring, and I can show you a woman who will sacrifice virtue, if necessary, to avoid the burden of them. Love of offspring is the base principal of all human love and virtue. Do away with it, and love and loveliness become meaningless sentiment. Those born in this way are selfish, and devoid of constancy. They enjoy being worshiped and loved, for it caters to their selfishness, but they have nothing to give in return.”

TWELFTH.

MRS. BENNEY'S CHANGE. ROBERT'S JEALOUSY:—HIS FIRST ACCUSATION. DR. HLADLY EXPLAINS HOW WOMEN ATTEMPT TO DEFEAT NATURE, AND WHO ARE THEIR TUTORS IN THIS HEALTH DESTROYING PRACTICE.

Robert Benney noticed, from the time of his wife's sickness, a gradual letting down in interest on her part in their home. For several weeks after her visit to the doctor, she excused herself for having no interest in their evenings on the plea of not feeling well, and invariably retired early. Her excuse was taken in good faith by Robert, who was very kind at all times. He suggested having the doctor to see her, but she refused. It became necessary in the course of time for her to pay Dr. Fox some money, and after debating the subject in her mind for several days, she at last concluded to take it to him. She was compelled to admit to herself that she had more interest in the doctor than a desire to pay him the money. She could not understand the condition of her mind. He had treated her badly. He had proved himself in every way a man who did not compare with any ideal that she had ever formed of men. She had thought over much he had said to her, and the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

truthfulness of it was apparent. She was either under his influence, or her true nature was gaining ascendancy.

In a desperate, reckless abandon, she called upon the doctor and spent quite a long time with him. This visit was not accompanied by clashing, as the others had been. The doctor gave sympathy and advice. He told her to go out more. Go to the theatre. Go out into society and forget herself. That she was staying at home so much that she was becoming morbid. He advised her to walk out every day, and to call at least once a week upon him so that he could advise her.

Weeks ran into months, and months into a year, at the end of which time she had put by all her morbid desire for staying in the house. Daily she was on the street. Books had no charm for her, and home was the last place in the world that offered attraction for her. Robert had often chided her for not giving her home more attention. At first, when she began to go out, he was glad to go with her, for he felt that she needed it. But it became irksome, for she was not happy unless she could go somewhere every evening. At last he permitted her to go out with friends, as he had work to do at home.

One evening he sat up much later than usual to see her when she came home. When she did come, her breath was pretty heavily charged with the fumes of wine. He expressed surprise, but she satisfactorily explained that she stopped with her friends on the way home at the house of

another friend, and they all took a little wine.

A few days later she was again taken sick with symptoms similar to her former illness. Dr. Headly was sent for. The doctor recognized the illness to be the same as before, and of course the treatment was the same. Robert called on the doctor to find out his opinion of the case, and was told that it was of the same nature as before. As to the cause, Robert was no wiser than before. But when she had fully recovered, he demanded of her to tell the reason for so much sickness—if she was injuring herself in any way, or if she had procured the services of some *villianous doctor*.

This was the first intimation of doubt on his part, and at the mention of “villianous doctor,” her face became scarlet. This was the first blush of guilt, and it went through him like a knife.

Poor Mrs. Benney! This was an unlooked-for surprise, and found her off guard. The tell-tale blush had done its work. The inoculation of doubt and jealousy had been made, and from now Robert Benney was converted into another type of man. He insisted on her telling, and she protested that she had nothing to tell. Dr. Headly had given him no satisfaction, farther than to say that many women succeed in bringing this trouble upon themselves by extempore probes; tents made of sponge or elm-bark, etc.; that cases had been known where surgeons had removed these foreign bodies from the bladder, where they had been ignorantly and accidentally placed by women who

knew as much of anatomy as they did of morality. Some resorted to drugs, which often made them very sick; in fact, throw them into convulsions, without accomplishing the desired results.

In conversation with the doctor, Robert asked:

“How do women come into the possession of such knowledge?”

“Usually the information comes from a puppet doctor, who has neither the knowledge nor the manhood to be a respectable criminal—a whining cur that puts into the hands of foolish, silly women an instrument he has neither the daring nor the skill to use successfully; who would be, if nature had not played a masquerade in evolving him, a criminal of the deepest dye; but instead he peddles out this crude, unscientific knowledge for a pittance, and sells to the same class of individuals preventatives of all kinds, that are potent only in their failures. This class of pseudo-physicians are usually loud in their denunciation of men who do a respectable job in this nefarious practice, when at the same time their own cowardly, ignorant advice is doing ten times the injury. Such creeping, crawling, professional nonentities are virtuous only in their ignorance.

When asked by Robert if, in his opinion, Mrs. Benney had resorted to any of these devices, the doctor gave it as his opinion that she had not.

This threw him off; but with his doubt continuing,

his business suffered, for he lacked interest. His library lost its charm, and he fought hard to drown his suspicions. As time passed, he felt better, and would be his old self again, to be again plunged into misery.

He felt that there was no longer existing between himself and his wife that freedom and good cheer which they had enjoyed in each other's society the first years of their married life. He frequently called upon his mother, who had been told of his trouble, and she cheered him up and tried to make him believe that his troubles were imaginary—that they were due to close confinement to business, and that he must be out more and rest; she advised him to take a trip and forget himself.

At last the father, Robert Benney, Sr., was taken into his confidence, and he advised him to sell his business, and take a year in rest and recreation, and at the end of that time resume with renewed energies.

The father thought that, if the wife, Mrs. Benney, Jr., could be taken from her friends for a year or two, she would lose her attachment for them and become restored to her husband again.

Robert reluctantly acquiesced in the suggestion of his father. After a week or two of consideration, the business was sold and the trip planned.

Mrs. Benney, Jr., fell into the idea without hesitancy, for she could see an escape from her entanglements, and she felt that if she could get away she could once more lift

her head up and be herself.

She called upon Bessie, who was out of health, and told her of her expected trip. Bessie congratulated her, and wished that she could go too.

After visiting all her friends and bidding them good-bye, she called upon Dr. Fox, and told him all her plans. He too was glad that she was to go, and told her that he expected to take his outing as usual, and that if she would let him know where she was at the time, he would spend a little while with her.

The arrangements were all completed, and Robert and Mrs. Benney started. They intended to visit all the leading Southern cities first, and after that plan for the future. The arranging and planning for the trip had enlivened and brought the husband and wife nearer together than they had been for sometime. The interest and attention shown Robert by his wife had almost dispelled the gloom that had been hanging over him for some time, and he said to her, the evening before they started on their trip, that it seemed as if a cloud had been lifted so that he could see her as of old, which he had not been able to do for some time.

Robert had not had enough experience with the world to know that most women become wonderfully attached to a husband in the excitements of life. Very poor wives make very good ones when relieved of responsibility, and when they can have all the sightseeing they want. Such women need one man and the whole world as a play-thing, to be congenial, and even then the world will have to be swapped off for one of the other planets every little while. If a man ever settles down with this kind of a wife for any length of time, her nature changes, and hades begins to materialize.

THIRTEENTH.

PITFALLS FOR YOUNG WOMEN. DR. FOX AND JUDGE BROWN ENJOY A NIGHT OUT. A CHARACTERISTIC *tete-a-tete* IN WHICH THEY BANDY EACH OTHER ABOUT APPROACHING SENILITY.

Sub rosa REMINISCENCES, ETC.

When Mrs. Benney had gone from Dr. Fox's office, he called his barouchet and was driven to the hospital, where he had many patients. He hurried through from one case to another, ordering this and that for each one, as was indicated; not forgetting to smile benignantlly upon all the comely nurses, and managing to find fault with the interne for neglect of duty, giving it as his opinion that if that functionary would give to his business as careful attention as he did to some of the nurses, he would get along better.

Dr. Fox was a favorite with the pretty nurses, for, when off duty, it was no uncommon thing for them to call upon him at his office, where he would treat them to wine and furnish them with the best brand of cigarettes, which he kept on hand for their benefit. A real handsome nurse was a luxury he especially enjoyed, and he had a penchant for putting them under obligations to him by finding them rich families in which they could stay as long as they liked; for his clients always employed those he recom-

mended; and as to the length of their stay, that depended upon his opinion, and his opinion was governed by the nurse's desire. A nurse who "stood in" with him never lacked for anything. Unfortunately, most of them became *passee*, and then they would have to give way to one more prepossessing. A nurse with a common face and figure had no show with him; her qualifications might be unimpeachable, but she would have to seek her business from doctors less favored with patronage.

Nurses with ideal requirements, viz: a fine physique, are like typewriters of the same order. They seldom find it necessary to seek employment from the mediocre professional man. They go to the professional man holding a rich clientage, where they are employed at handsome salaries, while those less favored by nature could be had for one-third the price. This is all right if it does not cost the woman too much; but there is an eternal fitness to things, which must be observed. These women are ambitious, but unfortunate in their birth environments, and they have taken up their profession as a business out of which to make their living. They have not known anything about the world's best (?) people; they only know that there is a wonderful gulf dividing their birth from the world's rich. They know nothing but respect for people who can scorn them if they like. The great majority may affect to despise and hate the fortunate minority, but this hate quickly melts before a kind, sympathetic word, a smile that they cannot fathom.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

Little do these ambitious women, whom nature has endowed with her most precious gifts, know of these people who are to be their employers, and a smile or a word in a patronizing air unsettles them. They begin to think they are of more importance in the world than their lives have led them to believe. What a grand thing it would be if every young woman could understand, once for all, that a poor, beautiful young woman is recognized by the majority of society men as their legitimate prey, and that the conquest is made easy by the unnatural relationship which business relations bring about!

Every man or woman in the possession of normal faculties enjoys being respected by his or her equals, and more so by those whom nature has placed in a higher sphere. People who belong by birth to the common walks of life cannot know those of more fortunate birth, and who are moving on a scale above them. It is natural for them to have a little higher opinion of such people; and often this opinion goes so far as to make them believe these fortunate people incapable of doing a mean thing. This is pretty generally true of young, inexperienced girls. If an old dotard, made prematurely old by licentiousness, happens to smile upon one of these beautiful young women, tells her how pretty she is, chucks her under the chin, and even offers to kiss her, she will not look upon it in the same way she would if the insult came from a man in her own station in life. She will be inclined to recognize it as

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

a compliment, and as he is near the age of her father, she will look upon it as a manifestation of a deep fatherly interest. He may add to this a gift, or a little extra privilege; let her out oftener from her work; even have her to lunch with him, as *he is so domestic he can't eat away from the family unless some lady friend accompanies him*. This ignorant but confiding young woman would not accept the invitation from a young man, but she feels as safe with this old reprobate, this devil incarnate, this prince of diabolical fiends, as she would with her father. Why not? Is he not a "gentleman"? He is a leader in society. He is wealthy. Everybody respects him. He has a most elegant family, made up of sons and daughters who are so infernally snobbish that they would not consider her a good foot-rug, if she could have eyes to read below the surface. It is true, they are all suave when she meets them. They do condescend to exchange a few words with her; and why not? For them to do otherwise would not be in keeping with good breeding, and if there is anything such people are anxious about, it is to display their superior breeding. If the breeding were traced back, not very far, it would smell of the wine room, brewery, livery barn, machine shop, packing house, country store, or show the dust of the mine, farm, or possibly take origin of a bunco parlor or a patent-medicine factory, all of which occupations they now affect to despise. But the biography will stop short of this ancient pedigree, if left to them.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

These unfortunate girls will go from a small beginning to a large ending in accepting this diabolical flattery, till a day comes when they will be wise, and nothing more.

After Dr. Fox had finished his hospital visits, he was driven to a number of the finest residences in the city, and, in finishing up, was taken to the office of Judge Brown.

“Judge, I have made arrangements for a night at the salon. Will you go?”

“I am with you, doctor. What time shall I call for you?”

“Come up to the office, and we will go at our convenience.”

This amusement house was most handsomely arranged. A large dance hall, with *café* and wine rooms, parlors and private “retreats” for select companies that objected to mingling with the crowd. The carpets and finishings were the most expensive that money could buy. A porter for each retreat. The patrons of this house could enter and mingle with the world, or step into a retreat and be hidden from public gaze as completely as if the earth had swallowed them up.

Judge Brown called at eight, and he and the doctor conversed in the latter’s library until they had finished a *havana* each.

“Well, doctor, how have you been since our last evening?”

“Quite well, and busy, thanks. How much justice

have you meted out of late?"

"The mill runs about the same. I sent one fellow up for forgery, one for rape, and another for procuring."

"I suppose you were easy on the two latter?"

"No, indeed. I gave them the full limit. Such excrescences on society should be locked up."

"Suppose all who were deserving, but more systematic and genteel in their manipulations, were locked up?"

"A great many people would be compelled to look up new family physician."

"And another dispenser of justice."

"That will do, doctor. It's a 'horse and horse.' By the way, Foxie, what became of that beautiful, that exquisite piece of human architecture that was so badly done up on you at our last night at the salon?"

"She left the city to-day with her husband, to spend a year or two in travel."

"I did not know but what there would be a chance for me to win her favor some time by granting her a divorce."

"On what grounds, would you imagine?"

"If for no other, then for cruel neglect."

"She says her husband is an ideal man."

"A man is criminally neglectful to let so lovely an animal as that roam out of his sight for one moment. If he had an atom of human knowledge he ought to know that she would be lassoed and run into some pinfold."

"Judge, you are smitten."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I confess, if I hang for it.”

“I thought you were too old to be afflicted with such emotions.”

“You must not think because you have a calcareous degeneration of the heart, that mine is not made up of flesh and blood, and impressionable.”

“You old veteran of a thousand conquests, you make me smile.”

“If I could win the smiles of that woman I would be willing to do a thing that, under any other conditions of life, I would loathe to do.”

“And what is that?”

“Exchange my name for yours.”

“I am sure you should be willing to do that for a less bonus. Yours is so common, so decidedly *passee*, that you should trade it for anything, to be rid of it. Fox is unique, short, and very suggestive.”

“There is where it comes in. Suggestive is the word. Think of the firebrands that the very name suggests, when, some of these days, the final rendering comes that will make Fox so conspicuous a figure that you would like to own the name of Brown, that you could lend off vicariously to other Browns a part of your notoriety, and divide up the retribution.”

“I don't know what to attribute your ill feelings to; whether you feel umbrage at my success, and at the same time indifference toward the tender sex, or offence at my

allusion to your unnatural senile emotions? If the former, we expect

“ ‘Base envy withers at others’ joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach.’

“ Or, if the latter, I will say it is becoming of us to approach our decline with gracious reconciliation.”

“ Senility has many augural hints that cannot be mistaken. Satiety is one, and you have confessed your decline in interest for woman. Hence you lead me in age by many years.”

“ Dotage is often accompanied by foolish, impotent fondness for women—age masquerading as youth! A more pathetic farce could not be found upon the boards.”

Well, doctor, when I get there, you will be on hand to introduce me, unless you play me the game you did with that flown beauty.”

“ Really, judge, there was no malice aforethought in not introducing you to her. I saw you were graciously supplied; besides, the ‘beautiful animal,’ as you are pleased to denominate my company, is as yet a little diffident. I had to take her home rather early, for as yet she has not broken the connubial bonds. When she returns I will take pleasure in presenting her to you.”

“ Possibly she will have learned to love her husband by that time, and then she will not only be lost to you, but to me also,”

“ I’ll risk that. She may be safe for a while, but the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

general trend of the woman is to a butterfly life. She desires no responsibility, and this is the weight that will bring her down. She is just like her mother was twenty years ago, and you know something of her. She led a pretty rapid life—not so loud, however, that she ever lost prestige in society. But she kept the captain in pretty hot water while he lived, and the property he left, with his fifty-thousand insurance, has helped her to enjoy life in a quiet way ever since. Well do I remember, some fifteen years ago, she sent for me to see her, and when I got there I found that it was lodge night for the captain, and that she had sent for me to keep her company, as she was alone (this daughter was always away from home). We had only just got settled for the evening when there was a rap at the door. I could not make my exit from a window; for we were on the third floor. The woman's intuition commands my respect to this day. She fumbled at the lock for some time, and then called out to the captain that he had better go downstairs and get the key out of the back door, as she could not throw the bolt with the one she had. Off he went, and in a jiffy I was directed to a door that led from the hall to the garret. When the captain came back with the key, he unlocked the door, and passed in. When I heard the door locked after him, I was not long in getting to the street.”

“A close call, doctor. If he had killed you, I should have hung him, and then what a lot of sin this world

would have been spared.”

“I don’t know, judge. It has often been a query with me, if the good I have done in the world would balance the bad. I have saved thousands of embryonic human beings the great misfortune of birth and life that would have been nately cursed by sensuous conceptions, and the untold misery their perverted natures would have brought to others if they had been given a life of say fifty years each; then those of their begetting, who would inherit a still lower type; and so on *ad infinitum*. I have relieved pain, and have given some, more, possibly, than I have relieved. Perhaps my blunders have made widows and orphans. With all my blunders, I have tried to do good, and some even believe I have; and sometimes, when I am in my cups, I grow to immense proportions, and think myself quite a doctor.”

“Well, I can only answer for myself. Whether you have been a good to me or an evil, I recognize a great indebtedness to you in relieving pain, and also the number of heirs, legitimate and otherwise, to my estate.”

“Especially the otherwise, judge. If it had not been for me, there would have been several ghosts of your dead sins rising up after your demise to contest your will and your good name.”

“For this you have my eternal gratitude.”

“If circumstances had not brought us together so that we could have protected each other, I don’t know where we

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

should have turned up. You have not forgotten, away back in our beginnings, that case that threatened my incarceration for malpractice upon the person of a servant of Deacon Wyly's. Poor old Wyly was in lots of trouble, and his family held such a popular place in society that it was positively necessary to cover his mistake. The girl was plucky. I have always had more respect for servant girls since then. After the affair was out, however, and the grand jury got hold of it, with Wyly as foreman, and you as State's Attorney, I was safe, provided the girl kept firm, which she did. If Wyly did not remember her in his will, his rest should not be unbroken. I've understood it cost him a 'pretty penny,' which he could well afford. Since that time I have been under obligations to you, for had it not been for your wise management of the affair I should have been locked up, and my reputation gone. With us, honors are easy. By the way, we must move toward the salon, or the bacchanalian fairies will have flown, and we shall be left to (re)treat ourselves."

"By Joe! doctor, I never had associated in my mind the simile of that word, retreat, with what really takes place in those secluded little nooks. It is treat and retreat in those retreats, and there are more retreats than treats, until a fellow is unable to beat a retreat, unless a treaty is made with a cabman, and then he must be treated to get us quickly where you can (re)treat us, in accordance with the best treatise."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

The doctor and judge passed into the dance hall, watched the dancers for a while, and then took the elevator to the office upstairs, where they made arrangements for a retreat. They found that the porter they wanted was engaged, but an exchange was made for a consideration, and their faithful, time-tried waiter was at their service. "Jim" was his euphonious name.

"Jim," said the doctor, "bring us some cigars, and then go down and bring us a list of names of those not engaged."

There was a large parlor where those desiring to form acquaintances could meet others desiring the same, and they were not required to be introduced. All one had to do was simply walk up to a lady and exchange cards, and enter at once into conversation. Some care was exercised on the part of the management to have none but gentlemen and ladies meet in this parlor. In fact, none but members of the club were admitted. Strangers, unless recommended by three members, could not get in. The doctor and the judge were so well acquainted they could select from cards, and by this means their partiality would not be known to some they might meet. Jim returned with cigars, and then went to the parlor for the list of names of ladies waiting for invitations.

The cards were submitted, and, as is usually the way with middle-aged men, they selected girls of less than twenty. These girls belonged to *bon ton* families, who had

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

permitted them to go to the salon dancing-hall, for this resort was popular, and such families did not know of this retreat attachment. If they did, a chaperon would be required, and often the chaperon would be a member of the secret club department; in other words, these chaperons were often the vilest procuresses, but, as they had a good standing in society, their double lives were not known.

These beautiful girls were invited to the retreat, and the bestial carnival that followed is better imagined than described, for "To say what should be said, to only say what should be said, and to say it as it should be said," is a requirement to which few can attain.

FOURTEENTH.

A year had passed, and Robert Benney and his wife had visited all the principal points in the South, making quite a lengthy stay at each of the war-famed cities, taking in all the old battlefields, national cemeteries, etc. They spent more time at Washington than elsewhere, visiting various places of interest. Mrs. Benney was restless, withal, and was better satisfied when on the move. Robert could see that his wife was a changed woman, or he thought he could. The mystery hovering about her illnesses, and that ever-present blush, were his day-dreams. Whether the change was in his imagination, or real, he himself could not divine. He would banish it from his mind, and at times congratulate himself that he was growing out of and away from it; but in her conversation she would say something which would bring his old thoughts up afresh to torture him. Probably she felt this change in him, although he had never mentioned it from the time they had left home.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

Two people cannot live together and have secret thoughts of each other, of a character they hesitate to express, without a mutual absorption of the feelings engendered thereby. This was true of both. There was a constant growing distrust which both struggled to conceal, but which would not down, and remained with them to destroy that open frankness which is necessary to the growth of true love.

Their visits and pleasure-seeking were on the order of one sitting down to a bountifully supplied feast without appetite. Neither was getting benefit or pleasure. Robert concluded to write to his father concerning his state of mind, and ask his advice, so he took occasion to do so one afternoon, when Mrs. Benney had gone out for a drive with some of the ladies stopping at the Kimball House.

"KIMBALL HOUSE,
"ATLANTA, GA., Feb. 22, 18—.

"*Robert Benney, Sr.*

"*Dear Father:*

"I am well, physically. Mentally, about as you saw me one year ago. I have refrained from disturbing you with foolish complaining heretofore, for I realize how selfish it would be in me to keep you and that dearest mother in distress about me, when you could not give relief. I have tried faithfully and hard to down this inner something that tells me there is a constantly widening difference existing between Kate and myself. I know that she feels the same toward me, and I believe that she has been as faithfully trying to banish this same feeling. Please, father, consult with mother, and advise me what to do. Shall I tell her of my cruel suspicions, and the very unhappy state I am in? Shall I come home? Of what use is this farce of pleasure—and rest-seeking, when I have less pleasure daily, and grow more weary all the time?

"Love to you both.

"Your unhappy son,

"ROBERT BENNEY, JR."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

In answer to this letter Robert Benney received a telegram from his father, telling him to return home at once. Within two days after receiving the telegram they started home, and, without incident, arrived and found that friends had arranged their home as comfortably to receive them as if they had only been out for a day.

Mrs. Benney appeared as happy to get back as she had been to leave. Robert and his father had a private talk the next day, and it was agreed between them that Robert was to stay out of business until his affairs were settled more definitely. Mr. Benney, Sr., being a practical man, told Robert that it would be hazardous for him to attempt business in his present state of mind, and that he should take a clerkship for the present. This did not please Mrs. Benney, for she did not see how they were to keep up their previous appearances on a salary, and she knew that Robert would not be willing to take from his capital. This objection was met by a promise that the clerkship would not be held for more than a year. But it was necessary to keep out of business until he felt that he could do it justice.

“Why aren’t you able to attend to business as well now as before?”

“Simply because you have made me so unhappy that my mind is on nothing but you.”

“I have known all along that you were growing cold toward me, and I should like to have an explanation.”



These beautiful girls were invited to the retreat.—Page 149.



Robert Benney saw his wife pass into the retreat.—Page 160.

“ I have no explanation, except that you are changed.”

“ In what way?”

“ I can't tell. Only I know you are changed.”

“ It is imagination.”

“ If it is, I can get over it. So let us drop the subject.”

“ Robert went to work for his father, and made up his mind that he would subdue his feelings. Affairs ran on as usual, until one day the collector was sick, and Mr. Benney, Sr., told Robert to take the collector's place until he was well enough to return—that it would be good for him to get out.

Robert started out on a tour of the business blocks, and as he had a collection on Dr. Fox, he went to the doctor's office, where he found several waiting. Being in a hurry, he wrote a notice and dropped it in the letter-box, and was just leaving when Mrs. Benney came in.

“ Hello!” said he, “ what have you come here for?”

Mrs. Benney flushed as she had on one other occasion, and stammered out something inaudible, but in a moment regained her composure and said:

“ I accompanied Mrs. Adams down the street, and I have called here for her. She is consulting her physician.”

Robert passed out and lingered on the street for her. He felt ashamed to be suspicious and play the spy, but something held him. He called a boy and wrote a note to his father, saying that he would not be in the bank that afternoon, as he was unavoidably held away.

He took his station in an office across the way and waited for her to come downstairs. An hour passed, and at last she came, and took the street-car for home. Mrs. Adams was not with her. He at once called a hack and was driven to Mrs. Adams'. He rang the bell. A maid opened the door. He asked to see Mrs. Adams. The girl seated him in the parlor, and called Mrs. Adams who came in.

"Mrs. Adams, have you seen my wife this afternoon?"

"No, Mr. Benney. Was she coming here?"

"I understood that she was to see you, and I supposed here."

"No, I have not been feeling well to-day, and I have not even taken a drive."

After a few minutes' talk about his Southern trip, etc., he bowed himself out. He was frantic with jealousy, disappointment, and humiliation. He was driven to his father's, whose counsel he felt that he needed before meeting his wife. He told his experience of the afternoon, and his father advised him not to act rashly, but by all means settle his nerves by at least one night's sleep before doing anything. This he promised his father to do, and also promised that he would have another talk with him before acting.

Robert had great control over himself, and when he got home he said nothing about their meeting at the doctor's office, until she asked him how he happened to be there.

“I had a collection for the bank on him, but he was busy, and I could not wait, so I left a notice and was leaving when I met you.”

“I did not have long to wait for Mrs. Adams, and then we went shopping together.”

“You are quite fond of Mrs. Adams.”

“Yes, she has been a friend of mine since I was a little girl. She is a young old woman. I like her as well as some of my younger friends.”

“She has the bearing of a lady.”

“She is a lady. I promised her to go with her to the dance hall to-night. We do not expect to dance; we go to look on, until satisfied, and then come home. Would you like to go along?”

“No, I have some work on the books that I shall have to do to-night. The collector being sick, I shall have to do a little extra work.”

Soon after Mrs. Benney started to go (as she said) to Mrs. Adams'. Robert also started for Mrs. Adams'. He hoped that he would find that Mrs. Adams had gone with his wife, for he could not, with all his doubting, believe his wife as foul as she was painting herself.

The nearer he got to Mrs. Adams' residence, the more he wished he had not started, for it made a second call for that day on the same errand, and he felt humiliated by it; but a something over which he had no control was driving him faster and faster, until at last he touched the door-bell.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

The servant seated him, and Mrs. Adams soon came in.

“Is it you, Mr. Benney?”

“Yes, Mrs. Adams. Is my wife here?”

“No. Hasn’t she got home yet?”

“Yes. But she has gone again, and said she was going with you to the salon dance hall.

Robert was so excited and wild with disappointment that he did not know what he was saying. But he saw in a moment that Mrs. Adams knew nothing about the engagement. Mrs. Adams might have protected Mrs. Benney if she could have had a minute to think, but it was now too late.

“I am getting ready to go, but was not expecting her to go with me. The dancers will be masked. I expected to go, as many do, to look on.”

Mrs. Adams could see his distress, and curiosity prompted her to ask why he should feel so worried.

“Mrs. Adams, I ought not say a word to you about this, but I am beside myself to-night. I am not responsible.”

He told her why he had called in the afternoon, and now to find that what Mrs. Benney had told him was not true was causing him to lose all confidence. Besides, he could not understand her actions. “She must be mad.”

Mrs. Adams’ quick perceptions took in the situation, and she said to herself: “Mrs. Benney had made an en-

gagement with Dr. Fox," and her jealousy was equal to Robert's.

"Perhaps, Mr. Benney, you had better go with me to the salon, and we will meet her there. She may have intended to go with me, but changed her mind, and has gone with some of the other ladies. Women sometimes do that."

"If my wife is innocent I shall be ashamed to dog her there. I hate a spy, and hate a disposition to spy."

"Mr. Benney, it does not hurt an innocent person to be watched, and I am sure, if she thought you were suspicious of her she would be glad to have you play the spy."

"I can't do it. I will not follow her."

"I will suggest a plan, and it will do no harm for you to try it. Besides, if you satisfy yourself, you will ever after be glad for the peace that it will bring you."

"What is your suggestion?"

"We will mask. I have a great wardrobe of suits. We will fix ourselves up so we can take in the whole thing, and no one will be the wiser."

"I will leave it to you, Mrs. Adams."

"Excuse me, then, and I will go upstairs and make a selection."

While selecting the masks, Mrs. Adams was thinking to herself about the hypocrisy of Dr. Fox, and how she, to-night, was determined to expose him.

In an hour, which seemed a week to Robert, they were

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

in the dance hall, disguised in such a way that their nearest friends did not recognize them. They looked over the hall, but Mrs. Benney could not be seen.

“She is not here, Mrs. Adams.”

“We will sit here for a while and watch for her. Possibly she has not come yet.”

Mrs. Adams' quick eye had taken in a couple, and she had hardly taken her eyes off of them. She was so well acquainted with Dr. Fox that she knew him by his movements in the dance. After watching the couple until satisfied that she could not be mistaken, she proposed to Robert that they join the dance.

“I do not feel like it, but for your pleasure I will.”

They waltzed around the room twice. Two finer dancers were not on the floor. In fact, they attracted quite a good deal of attention; many took their seats to watch them. Dr. Fox's observing faculties noticed something familiar in Mrs. Adams' movements, and he soon made up his mind that it was she, and he hoped that she would not recognize him. To prevent this he led his partner to a seat.

After he was seated he saw that Mrs. Adams was watching him, and he became restless. He sent his partner to the ladies' dressing-room to unmask, and he left the floor for the gentlemen's room.

Mrs. Adams knew that in a very short time they would be in a retreat, and then they would be lost. She excused

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

herself from Robert and went to the ladies' room, where she found Mrs. Benney unmasking. She quickly stepped into a private room, leading from the unmasking room, and asked the lady attendant to go quickly and bring Jim, the porter, to her.

Jim came, and said he was engaged for the evening.

"Who engaged you?"

"It is against our rules to tell."

"You tell me, Jim, and I will pay you well for it; besides, no one shall know you told me."

"I cannot tell, madam."

"You can tell me. You know me. I am the lady who gave you that ring you have on your finger for a similar service. You did not get into trouble about that."

"I know you. I am engaged by Dr. Fox."

"What room?"

"Number twenty-six."

"Is twenty-eight or twenty-seven engaged?"

"I don't know."

"Engage me twenty-seven, if you can, or twenty-eight. I had rather have twenty-seven, as that room is opposite twenty-six. Be quick, and on your return I will pay you."

Jim was gone but a few moments, and returned with twenty-seven engaged. Mrs. Adams feed and dismissed him with instructions to say twenty-seven was engaged, but he did not know to whom.

Mrs. Adams hurried out to Robrt, and quickly intro-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

duced him to three gentlemen who vouched for him and procured him a ticket to the gentlemen's parlor, from which room he had access to the retreats. Mrs. Adams gave him the ticket to twenty-seven, and requested him to go to it at once. "A porter will show you where to find it." She advised him to occupy it without a light, and keep his eyes on room twenty-six.

Robert had not long to wait, for Dr. Fox was anxious to hide from Mrs. Adams, and he passed into his room almost as soon as Robert had gone into twenty-seven. Jim was at his post, and the doctor sent him for Mrs. Benney, who was waiting in the parlor. In a few minutes Robert Benney saw his wife pass into the retreat. He was dazed. He shut the door of his room and fell back on a lounge and groaned. His groaning was of that reliefless, suffocating, tearless kind that is soul-consuming, relentless, terrible,—where the heart refuses to throw the blood, and the lungs refuse to perform their function,—where every drop of blood seems to have concentrated in the brain, and threatens to crush reason.

"I will kill them both!" hissed he between his teeth. "I will brain them and leave them to tell their own disgrace. No, I will not; that would be a kindness. I will leave them to their orgies, and let them die as nature sees fit; for retribution will come, and the slower the better. Why should I disgrace myself and my parents in avenging myself by committing a crime? No, I will not. I hate

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

her! She is the most miserable of fiends. She is too miserable, low, and contemptible to be noticed. She not only does not love me, but delights in dragging me down; humiliating me to the world; trailing my manhood in the filth, and prostituting my name. The love I gave her—the tender regard I have held for her—she cruelly despises. She throws me off, to take up with that villian—that debaucherous vulture—that reeking decomposition—that libel on God's creative genius! Oh, I hate her! I despise her! I abhor her! She deserves to be dismembered—burnt—cremated alive—damned through all eternity, along with that fiend incarnate.”

He tears his hair, strikes his breast, clutches at his throat, and struggles for breath.

“I will kill them! I will burn them! * * * *
Oh! my loved one—my darling wife—my all! Is this the manner in which I am to be requited for my worship of you? You miserable, abandoned woman! Is this the woman I have idolized, worshipped, and loved? I shall take as much delight in hating you as I have in loving you. She is hateful to my eyes. Oh, no, she is not. She is beautiful—she has been lovable. I shall always love her for what she was. That fiend has destroyed her. He shall be killed and I will kill him! What for? Does he not find in her a counterpart to his diabolical nature? And if they did not possess something in common they would not be drawn together. Why should I kill them?

If she loved me, she could not do this; and if she does not love me, why should I kill her for it? I might as well kill anyone else for not loving me. No, I will go home and suffer this out. She will only be too glad to have me kill her, when I confront her with my knowledge.—I will not.—I will go and leave them to their pleasure, for why should I make others miserable because I am?"

As he passed out of his room he could hear the merry laugh that mocked his misery. He rushed for their door, but with a superhuman effort he checked himself, and passed down to the parlor and out into the street.

He thought of suicide, but his mother came to his mind, and he checked that impulse. He wandered heedlessly through the streets, and finally he reached his home at one o'clock. On arriving at his gate he stopped and looked at his house, and thought of the first year or two of happiness that he had enjoyed in it. Those happy days were now gone, never to return. This place, with its happy remembrances, was to be also the sepulcher of his hopes and happiness. He sat down, and tears came, for the first time, to relieve his pent-up agony.

Mrs. Benney walked up the steps, and was shocked at seeing him sit there.

"Aren't you in bed yet? I stayed out longer than I expected, and I suppose you were uneasy about me."

"No, I was not feeling well, and I thought I would allow the cold wind to blow over me."

“You should be in bed if you are not well.”

“I presume that if you can stay up until this hour it will not hurt me.”

“I had a delightful evening. There were lots of dancers and some fine costumes.”

“It is late, and we had better retire. You can tell me of your evening at another time.”

They each went to their rooms—Mrs. Benney to sleep, and Robert to think. They met at the breakfast table the next morning, but did not do much talking. Occasionally Mrs. Benney would remark something about the evening before, but as Robert did not appear to be interested she did not volunteer much.

Robert consulted with his father and told him all. They then went to Dr. Headly for consultation. Robert had not talked with the doctor since his wife's last illness. They found the doctor busy with his microscope, but, on seeing the two Benney's, he came forward to meet them.

“Come in, gentlemen. I am glad to see you. Robert, you do not look well.”

“I do not feel well, but it is a mental sickness, and not of a nature that you can help very quickly.”

“Have you lost some of your old-time faith in me, Robert?”

“Not at all, doctor. My faith in and regard for you bring father and me to you now.”

Robert Benney, Sr., told the doctor all that had taken

place since the return of the young folks from their trip.

“Well, Mr. Benney, you are telling me nothing new. Of course, the details I know nothing of, but the main facts are not new to me.”

“Why did you not tell me, doctor?”

“I knew you would find out soon enough—as soon as you could become nerved to it.”

“You knew that Dr. Fox had helped my wife out of her so-called troubles?”

“Yes, I knew, as people know many things they have no way of proving. I knew Mrs. Adams was a close attendant upon your wife at each sickness, and I was aware of their mutual understanding of each other. The relationship of Mrs. Adams with Dr. Fox is an open secret. Besides, I have practiced medicine so long, and been so intimately acquainted with people and their troubles, that I can usually interpret a cause when you give me the effect. The *a priori* and *a posteriori* are processes of mental activity that become automatic with a physician after twenty-five years of work. I have never refused to work for poor as well as rich, and, as you know, I have more of God’s poor to care for than any other class of people. Much of my knowledge of human nature is due to my professional work among the poor.

“A young man comes to me with a broken-down condition of his nervous system. He presents a picture to me; this picture is the effect of long-past causes, and I

have no trouble in telling him how he distorted his health—what he has been engaged in of a demoralizing nature, and I tell him so many facts that he is startled; and often such patients accuse me of being a mind reader.

“Send me a man or woman suffering from mental worry, and I will not talk with him or her long until I can tell them some startling facts about themselves, which they supposed the world did not know. A young married woman presents herself to me; she is full of sighs; the world has lost all interest for her; her appetite is gone; she cannot take an interest in her home; everything is going wrong. She is shocked and bewildered when I tell her she is in love with some one not her husband; she will believe that her friend has betrayed her, or that some one has been playing her false. A young school-teacher consults me. We talk a short time, and she carefully avoids anything that may throw any light upon her case. After I get tired of angling to induce her to unburden her secret to me, I tell her she is in love, and that it is not reciprocated; that she had every reason to believe that it was, until she staked her all; but no sooner had she done this than she found that the love she supposed her lover had for her vanished like mist, and since then she had been making a vigorous effort to adjust herself to the inevitable. This frightens her, for she had supposed her secret would die with her. I assure her that I have faith in her, and that probably no one will ever know of her misfortune; that I would not, had it not

been that I have for years been studying human nature, and have learned that all mankind follow the same groove; that like causes always produce like effects, everything being equal; that environments change results, but when the combinations of the various environments are worked out, it is as easy to reason back to causes from the effects in one set of environments as in another."

"In your wife's case, Robert, I had the cause presented to me when she and you called upon me after your marriage. I had all the results marked out before she left the office. Hence, I say, I am not surprised."

"Well, doctor, Robert and I have come to get you to advise us what course to take."

"This is hard to do without thought. Of course it is folly for them to keep up the farce of living together, but to make trouble for Dr. Fox makes disgrace for all. You might call upon the doctor and have him settle upon Mrs. Benney a given sum, which of course the law will not compel Robert to do; but neither of you would be willing to leave her with nothing."

"No, doctor, I cannot treat my wife badly; neither do I want it to appear that my grievance can be settled with money."

"If you want to handle him by law, you will find him a hard man to conquer, for he has the best legal talent in the city on his side; besides, he has wealth. You had better settle quietly. Mr. Benney, you might call upon

him yourself, and confront him with all that Robert has told you, unless you are willing to bring in a third party. It may be you can settle the affair quietly, after which Robert can go out of the city until he forgets his troubles."

"Why can't you see him, doctor?"

"I being a physician, he might think I was taking too active a part in the affair, and look upon it in a different light from what he will if some one outside the profession calls upon him."

"I will go and see him. Robert can have a talk with his wife, and see if she will consent to a quiet divorce. We thank you, doctor, for your wise advice."

FIFTEENTH.

JUDGE BROWN MAKES A DESIRABLE WITNESS. DR. FOX PROVES THAT MRS. BENNEY IS INNOCENT. ROBERT IS RECONCILED AND MADE HAPPY. DR. FOX MORALIZES.

Robert Benney, Sr. called at Dr. Fox's office, and gave his card to the office boy to hand the doctor. The doctor received him at once, notwithstanding he had several patients waiting.

"Come in, Mr. Benney. I am glad to see you. Take this easy chair."

"Thank you, doctor. I have called to see you on a disagreeable subject, and I know of no better way to dispose of it than to plunge into the worst of it at once, and have it over with. Your clandestine conduct with my son's wife is fully known to him. The malpractice—her frequent and secret visits to your office, and your meetings with her at the salon, are fully known to him and to me. What have you to say about it?"

Dr. Fox displayed momentarily a decided discomposure, but, with a desperate struggle, he assumed his usual nonchalant manner, and said:

"Mr. Benney, this is a great surprise to me, coming as it does from a family for whom I have the most profound

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

respect, a family I would least suspect of pinning faith to an idle rumor."

"I would give a great deal if this disagreeable affair was only an idle rumor. You were watched last night by my son. He watched you from room twenty-seven in the salon, and you occupied room twenty-six. I understand that these private rooms are known as 'retreats'."

"Mr. Benney, I see I am caught, and I deserve the humiliation this acknowledgment brings to me; but I would not for the world bring disgrace to an innocent woman. Your son's wife was not with me. I swear he is mistaken, and I can prove it to you by producing the woman who was with me, rather than allow Mrs. Benney to rest under such a charge. Of course, no one cares to parade a fiendish nature before the public, and if I am to clear this matter up, it must be on your promise that no one is to know it except your own family."

"If you can prove (which I fear is doubtful), that Mrs. Benney was not with you, how are you to reconcile malpractice without her husband's consent?"

"I can show to you notes of request from her husband, imploring me to help her out of her trouble."

"Will you be kind enough to show them to me?"

"I will."

The doctor opened his safe and looked through several drawers where he kept private papers, and not finding what he wanted he said that probably he had put the notes in

a file that he had in his bank vault.

“If you will call in this evening at five o’clock, or to-morrow morning at eleven, I will have all the proofs here for everything I have told you.”

“I will suspend judgment, doctor, until you do as you say, and we will name as the hour eleven o’clock to-morrow. I will go and intercept Robert before he speaks to his wife about it.”

“By all means, Mr. Benney, spare the woman, if you can, such an accusation by her husband, if they are not exactly on terms of understanding, this may separate them, for it is a most foul charge of an innocent woman. Where is your son?”

“He is at the bank, if he has not gone to talk with her.”

“Here is my telephone, Mr. Benney, you can reach him sooner.”

Mr. Benney rang up the bank telephone, and Robert answered; his father told him to remain in the bank until he returned.

As soon as Mr. Benney, Sr., left the doctor’s office, the doctor dashed off a note to Mrs. Benney, explaining his interview with her father-in-law, and told her that it was positively necessary for her to write two forged requests for his services, on the two occasions, giving her dates of each from his book, so there would be no mistake, and requested her to appear as innocent as possible, and leave

the rest to him. He told her she could make any explanation to her husband she pleased for doing as she had; also to send along with the forged requests the name of some lady she could take into her confidence, as the person who accompanied her on the two occasions, for it would be necessary, in allaying suspicion, to make it appear that she was always accompanied by a lady companion.

The note was sent by a messenger-boy, with the promise of extra pay for a quick trip. The doctor did not send the note by his office boy, for he did not wish him to know anything if anyone should happen to ask him.

When Mrs. Benney read the note she was so completely upset in her nerves that it was with great difficulty she wrote out the forged requests, imitating her husband's writing as well as she could. She named Mrs. Bessie Cline as her confidante, and also told the doctor that, as it would not be safe for her to call upon him, she would send Mrs. Cline down in the afternoon to talk with him in her place, to whom he could unfold any plans he had to suggest, but for him to be very careful not to give her a hint about the masquerade ball, or if he had to say anything about the ball, he must be careful not to hint about the latter part of the evening.

The boy returned with the forged requests and note from Mrs. Benney; then the doctor sent him with a note to Judge Brown, requesting that gentleman to call upon him, if only for five minutes, on "important business."

The doctor took the forged requests, and immediately recognized that they were written upon the latest style of note paper, which would have betrayed the whole matter. As soon as the boy returned the doctor immediately dispatched him back to Mrs. Benney with the requests, and sent a brief note stating that the note paper was of too recent style; she must either use her husband's business paper, if there was any old enough, or borrow some common note paper. Women have an intuition that goes ahead of men's experience, but it is better, in important matters, to have both.

The boy returned a second time from Mrs. Benney, who had succeeded in finding some letter paper that had been in the house since the first year of their marriage. The doctor manipulated these forged requests between his fingers until they aged to his satisfaction, and then he placed them where they could be produced in evidence on the morrow.

The judge called as per request, and the doctor told him all about his experience with the woman with whom he (the judge) was so deeply infatuated.

"Now," says the doctor, "I want you to come to my office to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, and tell the father-in-law that you played cards with Mrs. Benney as a partner, at the residence of J. H. Cline's, where there was a small card party, and that you all walked down, about eleven o'clock, to the salon dance hall, and watched the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

masqueraders for a while, and that Mrs. Benney went and returned with the company. Do you understand?"

"Yes, but what am I to get out of all this lying?"

"I will relinquish all the claim I have on her, and turn her over to you."

"You will, ha? I think what claim you have on her now, since the coils of exposure are entwining around you so closely, I could stick in my eye without offending its sensitiveness. You are a pretty sly old fox, but you do have to take to your burrow occasionally."

"This is no time to be twitting me with stern facts. Wait until I get this 'coil of exposure' well off of me, then call upon me for anything, and it will be forthcoming."

"Yes: 'When the devil was sick,' etc. I will do anything you say if you will promise to forever keep your hands off of that most exquisite animal, and do what you can to turn her over to me."

"I will promise anything."

"Yes, but what is the use of promising if you never fulfill."

"You may depend upon me."

"I will be here at eleven to-morrow, and I want you, from now on, to be worthy of your name—be a sly old fox."

Mrs. Cline called upon the doctor and got his instructions as to how he wanted Mrs. Benney to talk to her husband.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Mrs. Cline, you must help Mrs. Benney out of this trouble. Mrs. Benney is to tell her husband that she spent the evening with you, where there was an impromptu card party, and you all walked down to the masquerade ball about eleven o'clock, and then all returned together. If necessary, you must come to my office to-morrow at eleven o'clock and make this statement. You will be sent for if needed. You are also to say that you came with Mrs. Benney on two occasions, of which you know. We can depend upon you, can we?”

“Most certainly, doctor; I owe you this much for all your kindness to me. I suppose her jealous old husband makes this necessary? My husband is jealous of you, and I suppose Robert Benney has no more cause to be than has my husband.”

“Not any more, except that last night we did go to the ball together, but you know that is not an uncommon affair. At the Elks Ball there is usually a promiscuous mixing of men and their wives, and neither knows the other is present.”

“I don't know why people need be so prudish. I would go if I had a chance. I will go back and tell Mrs. Benney what you have said, and when I can be of service to you let me know.”

“Mrs. Cline, understand that Judge Brown was at your house last night, whoever else you may name as being

there. Tell Mrs. Benney she is to say that the judge was her partner."

"All right; it shall be as you say."

* * * * *

"What a grand thing it is for me, now, that I never fancied her, for I might have been on such terms with her that I could not play innocent! A degree of familiarity beyond a certain point makes all women suspicious. Familiarity up to that point generates a confidence that will make them swear by you and for you. The partaking of the forbidden fruit does indeed amount to eating of the tree of knowledge, for a woman knows all about a man after that, and what she doesn't know she guesses at. Just one indiscretion brings jealousy and suspicion, but withhold at a tempting distance, and the world can't shake her confidence. Just one little imprudent act converts an innocent, confiding, virtuous woman into a suspicious, jealous, distrustful one. Man's fall has continued to repeat itself since the first transgression, and that pure innocence which makes one unconscious of nudity is converted by one brief act into a condition requiring a fig-leaf. What a duality exists in humanity! and what an infinitesimal line separates the innocent from the wise! When this line is once crossed there is no retracing the step. Innocence is forever lost, and countless millions mourn for that sweet content that can never return.

"How can the young world of innocence be taught to

avoid this great sepulcher of buried hope and happiness? Impossible! for the warning is of something they know nothing about. How can the color-blind be warned of a color they cannot perceive? How can the musically deaf be instructed in the delights of symphony? Those who can be taught are not innocent. Teaching is polluting. How are we not to teach? Must a loving father or mother keep sealed lips and permit that lovely daughter to go blindly on and fall a victim to the first onslaught of the villainous libertine? Or must they pollute that innocent mind with a knowledge that she cannot comprehend, and jeopardize the good opinion of that daughter by permitting her to know that behind their appearance is a knowledge that they themselves warn her to shun? The innocent girl will naturally reason that it cannot be so bad if father or mother or both know of it; the world and the people all look good to her; she can't believe there is bad when she sees no evidence of it. Ah! where is the justice in such incongruity, such contrariety, such a paradox?"

At eleven o'clock the next day, as per agreement, Mr. Robert Benney, Sr., and Judge Brown called at the doctor's office. The doctor received the gentlemen in his most pleasant, affable manner, and began at once by saying:

"Mr. Benney, I met Judge Brown this morning, and in the course of our conversation he incidentally remarked that he had a very pleasant game of cards last night, and had better luck than a few evenings ago, when he played

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

in very ill luck with some others and myself. I remarked that if he played a winning game he must have had a good partner, for I could not believe it due to his own playing. He said that he had a first-class partner, but that he was not willing to acknowledge himself a poor player. Then he told me Mrs. Robert Benney, Jr., was his partner, and that the playing was done at Mr. Cline's." Turning to the judge he said: "I have stated our conversation correctly, have I not, judge?"

"Yes, doctor, I happened in for an evening call at Mr. Cline's, with whom I have some legal business, and as there were a few others who called in, we had a very pleasant impromptu card party, and Mrs. Benney was my partner. After the cards we all strolled down to the salon dance hall and watched the dancers for a while, then we returned and disbanded."

"Thank you, judge. I asked you to call here and make this statement to help me clear up a case of mistaken identity."

The judge excused himself, and left the doctor and Mr. Benney to finish up their business together.

"Here are the notes of request. I found them as I expected. Take them and show them to Mr. Benney. I am sure his wife will not deny giving them to me, and your son will recognize his writing, no doubt. I did not humiliate the lady who was with me at the salon by bringing her here, which I should have done had it not been for

Judge Brown, but the judge's statement removes the necessity of an unpleasant exposure. I hope, Mr. Benney, you are satisfied that your son is mistaken?"

"It looks very much like a huge mistake on my son's part. I am glad it is, for it was a serious affair as we understood it, and after all the evidence is in and you are exonerated from the charge, I will make all due acknowledgements."

"Of course this embarrasses me much, but while I am exposed to you in a very compromising way, I hope to earn a favorable opinion by helping to remove a most foul accusation from your son's wife. I am given to sporting a little, but I never mix it with my business. I look upon my profession as sacred, and I govern myself accordingly. My office and business generally are run on strict business principles, and when I must sport, I get away from business and clients as far as I can."

"That is right, doctor, and I hope our affair will soon be settled, and if you are exonerated (and it looks very much that way now), I shall thank you; and in fact I do thank you in advance for your expressions of interest in my family; and as far as our own knowledge of your little episode, which we have unintentionally and unwittingly drawn out of you, is concerned, rest assured it shall not get out of the family."

"Thank you, Mr. Benney, I have implicit faith in your honor. I hope you will not ostracise me completely in a

social way on account of this knowledge you have of me."

"Not at all, doctor. Good-day."

"Good-day, Mr. Benney."

"Was there ever a slicker hand played? Old Foxey, you are pretty smooth, but you came very near being taken by the hounds this time; and from now on I will see that you do not stray quite so far from your burrow. Expertness is all that saved you from becoming a co-respondent in a divorce suit, and a defendant in a damage suit, with a little \$10,000 judgment looming up in the prospective, in spite of your legal friends. Well, why should I not hug myself, and treat myself pretty nicely, when by a little smooth prevaricating I can earn ten thousand dollars and save myself some unpleasant notoriety? I hope that beautiful 'animal' who has lost Judge Brown his head will have enough human wit to finish up her part of this affair in a credible manner. If I could see her for ten minutes affairs would be sealed and delivered to me."

Mr. Benney, Sr., had advised his son to say nothing to his wife until they could have time to consider the claims of Dr. Fox. Robert was positive he could not be mistaken, but when his father returned with the forged notes of request, and told him of Judge Brown's statement, he was perplexed, bewildered, and checkmated. He said to his father:

"Is it possible that my imagination could picture my

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

wife as plainly as she appeared to me, entering that room at the salon?"

"You know, Robert, you have been worrying for some-time, and your expectation was on tiptoe. You were ready to see anything and believe anything, and people under such mental strain have often had expectations realized, when they were purely hallucinations. You know that no man stands higher in the city for truth and veracity than does Judge Brown, and we must believe you were mistaken."

"Oh! father. How thankful I am that I did not wound her feelings by mentioning this subject to her until I found this out! I am a miserable, jealous fool. I might have known, if I had taken a second thought, that she could not be so vile. But those forged requests to Dr. Fox—they are bad enough; but I can forgive her for them, now that I find her exonerated from the worst charges."

"My son, I have always tried to teach you moderation, and to be slow in passing judgment. There is no rule like the one I have so often reminded you of, viz., never to act in matters of importance until you have slept at least one night. If one will take his judgment of a matter to bed with him, put it to one side, sleep, reconsider it the next day, and then act, much trouble will be avoided."

"Yes, I have been unusually blessed with a wise father and mother, and I have never had anything to regret when I have taken the advise of either. This lesson will surely teach me moderation."

Robert took the forged notes to his wife, and gave them to her without saying a word.

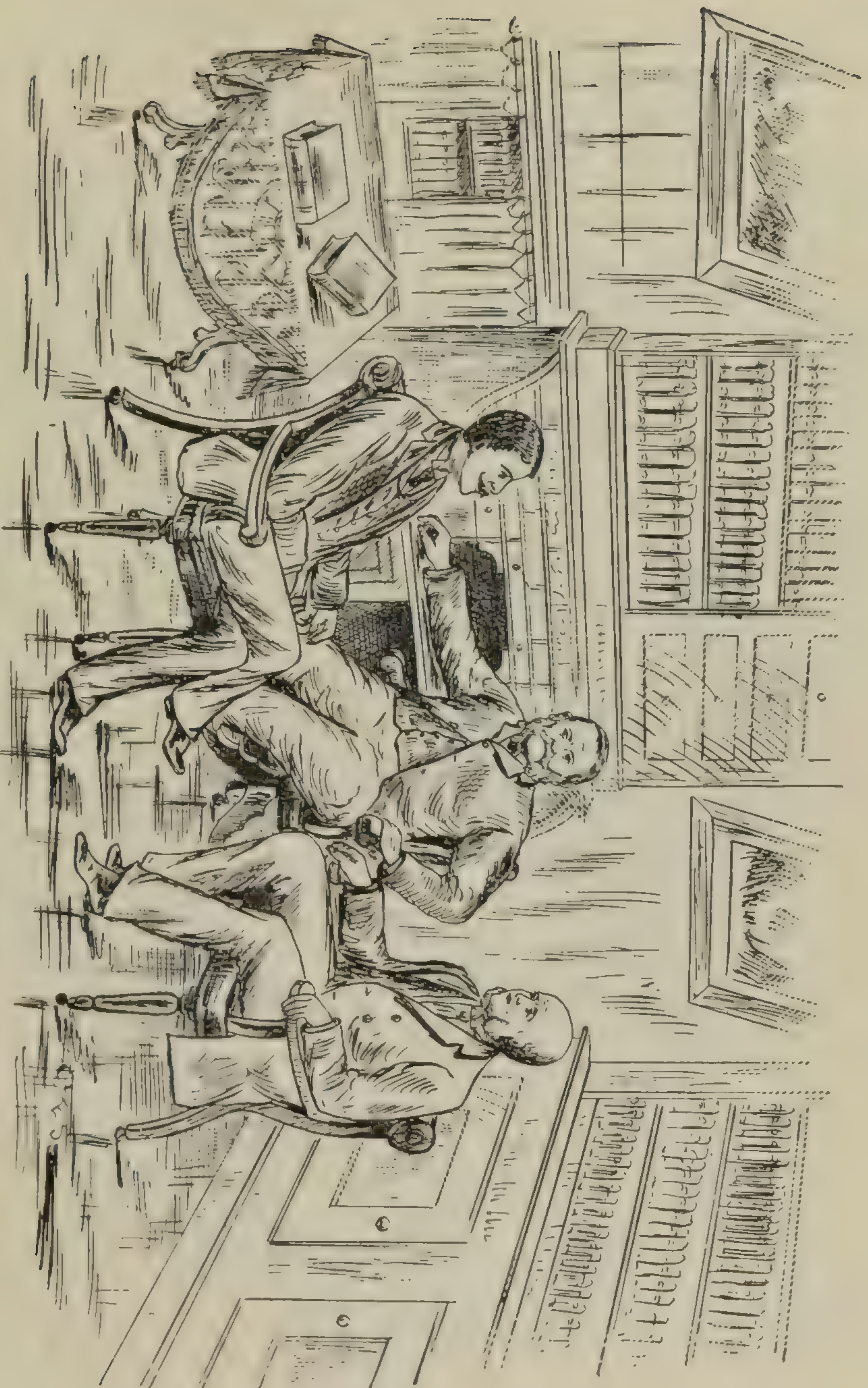
“My dear husband, I have been a bad, depraved woman. I have not deserved the respect and love you have shown me daily since I have known you. I deserve nothing better than to be thrown away from you. You were so opposed to my having my wish in the matter of family responsibility, that I took it upon myself and acted without your consent, which was very wrong, and I have regretted it ever since. I have felt that you must be suspicious of me, and *suspicion is death to love*. Now for sometime I have felt that I have forfeited your love, and had nearly, if not quite, lost it, and that thought has worked upon my mind night and day, making me reckless and careless of home, husband,—and life, for that matter. You forbade me keeping company with my good friend, Mrs. Cline, and I have kept up a clandestine friendship with her. If this was all, I should not feel so bad, but to keep up that friendship I have told falsehood after falsehood. I have told you of being with Mrs. Adams many times, when it was Mrs. Cline I was with. I do not like Mrs. Adams as a companion. I wish I did, for I believe she thinks a great deal of me, but she is so much older than myself that she is not always agreeable. Of course I have many other lady acquaintances, but there are only a few people we can count as our intimate friends.”

“My dear wife, I forgive all. You are better than I.

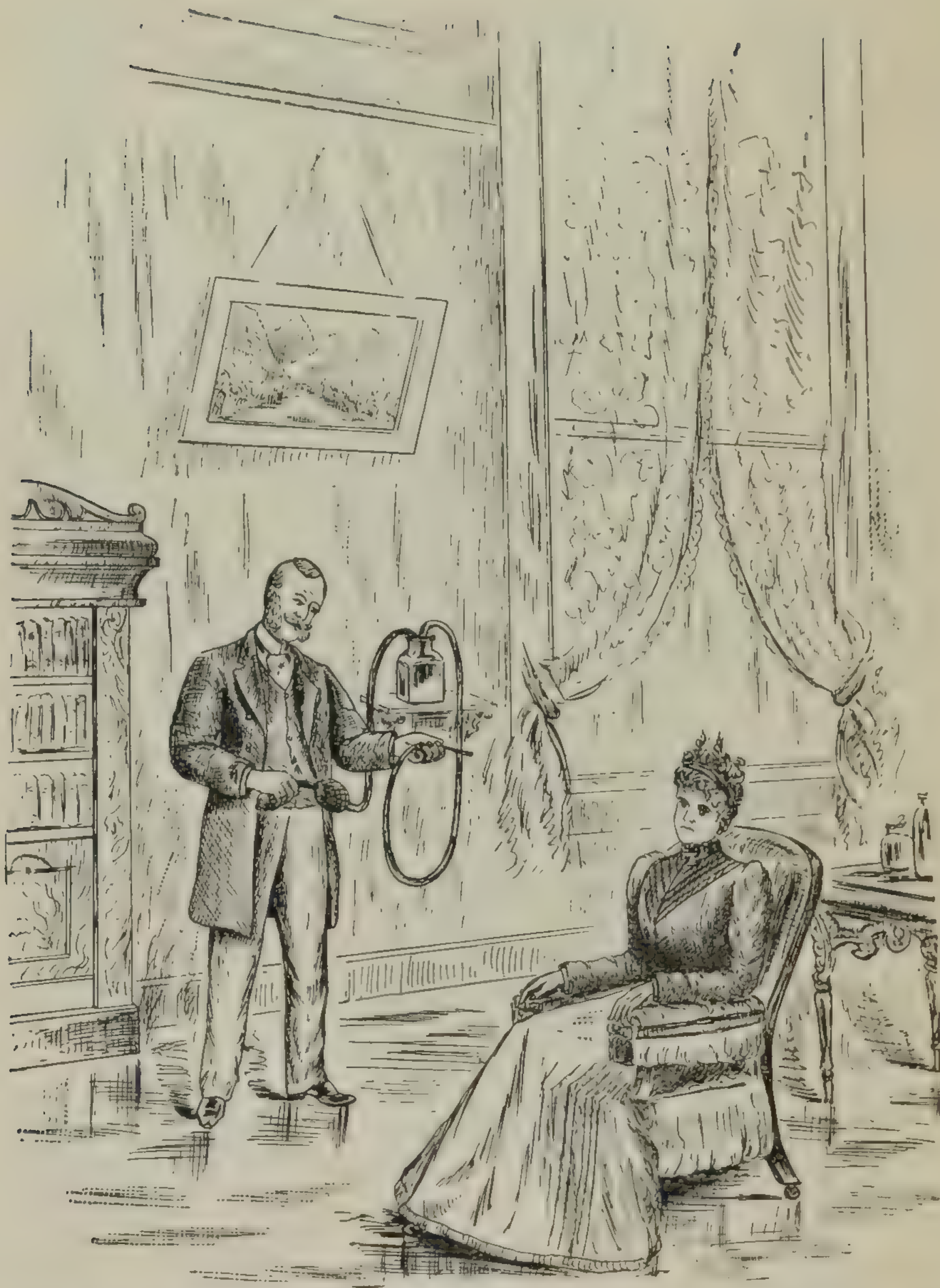
I have thought meaner of you than you have of me; so mean, I will not insult you by telling you. Can you forgive me for the most fiendish thoughts, and permit me to let them die unspoken?"

"With all my heart, Robert, dear, and I will not even refer to them if you can take me back to your confidence again and let us live the life we dreamed and talked of so much before we were married."

At this Robert took his wife in his arms and kissed and rained enough tears on her cheeks to wash away all their petty differences, and after an hour of this baptism of bliss, which only reconciled lovers can experience, they walked out to the dining-room, and sat and talked and laughed until the servant-girl was at a loss to know what had happened to them; for, during the time she had been engaged in the family, it had been the custom of Mr. and Mrs. Benney to pass the whole meal-time in saying nothing beyond commonplace table-talk, limited to "I will thank you for the bread;" "Thanks;" "No, thanks;" "This butter is rank;" "This dining-room is cold; I wish you would see about having some one come out to examine the register pipes, no heat passes through them." At this meal the girl was complimented on everything, and she said to herself: "Sure, und this is the poorest male I have sarved thim. Phat has cum into um? I've niver saw thim people take on in this phasion bafor. Tha'v got raligin as sure as oim Bridgit. Wal! did yes iver see the



Robert Benney and his father called upon Dr. Headdy.—Page 163.



Saying this, he took up a spraying apparatus and began to throw out a fine mist.—Page 196.

loikes of it? If he haint a kissing her. Sure and thar's to be a funeral or sumthin, und that moity quik."

Robert left for the bank, after spending more and happier hours at home than he had known for months. The banking hours were almost over, but there was an accumulation of work, due to his frequent absences of late, and he pitched into it with a vim that resulted in more work being accomplished than had been done by him at any time before in three times the length of time. Everyone in the bank noticed the change, and congratulated him on his returning health. Even Robert Benney, Sr., was surprised at the transformation, and his wonderful capacity for work. Instead of a moping, quiet, wordless man, in a short time he became the life of the institution. Puns, jokes, and sarcasm seemed to have a spontaneous generation from the neighborhood of his desk, and his sparkling wit seemed never to die out.

SIXTEENTH.

ROBERT AND HIS FATHER APOLOGIZE TO DR. FOX. DR. FOX PHILOSOPHISES. MRS. ADAMS' SCATHING ACCUSATION AND DENUNCIATION CAUSES THE DOCTOR TO CONFESS HIS IMMORAL AND CRIMINAL LIFE; HE ALSO CONFESSES HIS ILLEGITIMATE BIRTH. MRS. BASSETT WARNS DR. FOX OF HER INTENDED EXPOSURE. DR. FOX'S UNIQUE PLAN FOR THE MURDERS OF MRS. BASSETT.

A few days after the reconciliation between Robert and his wife, Mr. Benney, Sr., called upon Dr. Fox to apologize for the trouble to which Robert's "mistake" had put them, and to say that Robert joined him in craving his pardon.

"It is granted, Mr. Benney, and I feel well repaid, notwithstanding the humiliation I feel at being trapped in one of my most rare indiscretions, if I have been the means of putting your son and his wife upon a better understanding with each other."

"They are happy, Doctor, and we are all happy with them."

"This is one of the times, Mr. Benney, when good comes out of evil."

"Well, just as you will have it, doctor."

When Mr. Benney had gone from Dr. Fox's office, the doctor expanded his chest and said:

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Well, I can breathe freely. Once more I land safe and sound out of reach of a damage suit and unpleasant notoriety. It seems to me I am getting old enough to keep out of such troubles. I believe the older a man gets in the life I have been leading, as a side issue to my profession, the harder it is to get out of it. I started it to gain business, but why I still follow it I can't say, for I do not need the money that comes from it. It must be from habit. Oh, habit! what an unmerciful master you are! I will foot up for the past year and see what my business has amounted to.

“Thirty-five thousand dollars! Quite a respectable sum. Let me see; *twenty-five thousand blood money; ten thousand legitimate business. What a showing!* And I am recognized as a respectable physician! I am. Have I not the best families in the city? I am as good as they. But what of them? Some of them are boobies enough to be good people, and only employ me because I am popular. If they knew my life and the life of the people whose patronage makes me popular, they would be surprised, and no doubt feel something of chagrin at the stupidity of the followers of fashion. It has ever been, and always will be, that immorality will thrive, when sanctioned by the *elite*, and when it bears the insignia of the snobbish gentility. The geatest sticklers for puritanism will bow down before the immoral goddess of fashion, rather than suffer her smiles to be diverted. It is amusing to see the liberalizing influence that

prosperity and a slight recognition from the dictators of fashion have upon the stoical advocate of inflexible moral rectitude. Little by little the fixed principles so tenaciously held to in poverty and obscurity, crumble away, until the metamorphosis is complete, and our apathetic individual, in many instances, becomes one of the most liberal. Money and influence are potent proselytizers, liberalizers, and civilizers, while poverty and obscurity produce moralizers, individualizers, and brutalizers. The cocoon of poverty often hides a great social possibility, evidenced by the ambitious howling against the pleasures that are just out of reach.

“My life is not what I intended it to be when I started out. My ideal would not be introduced to the reality. The reality would be spurned and spat upon by the ideal; but my poor little ideal would have been a pauper, and would have been compelled to spit up instead of down, for the reality, as corrupt as it is, has a head quite high in the air, while the ideal is in the dust, with all its good qualities. Ideals, such as everyone has for everybody except himself to live up to, are good fellows, with plenty of good qualities, splendid morals, but ignorant and worthless, and as devoid of influence as a pauper can be; while the reality is an autocrat, with head erect, good clothes, plenty to eat, a good bank account, and a moral nature that is bankrupt. Such is life, and it is given to man to choose, to be good and nothing, or bad and something.”

At this point in the doctor's reverie Mrs. Adams walked

in unannounced.

“ You are alone, Dr. Fox. I am glad, for I desire to talk to you, and if you will be kind enough to lock that door I shall be obliged to you.”

Dr. Fox mechanically obeyed the request, for the tone of her voice made the request more of a command. His quick perception divined a storm approaching, and his knit brow was caused more from his intent reflection on the possible cause of her wrath than from anger at her authoritative manner. The years of their intimacy had given her rights which were not questioned by him. He had more than once been the victim of her jealous passion, and usually he had no trouble in flattering her into a good humor. There was something in her tone of voice at this time, however, that pierced him deeply, and caused the capillary blood-vessels to empty themselves into the systemic reservoirs. Either there was something unusual in her voice, or the life he had been living was telling upon his nervous system. The tremendous strain he had been under in clearing up his late trouble with the Benneys, no doubt had drawn more heavily on his reserve nerve-force than he was aware of, and being approached in this manner by Mrs. Adams sent another shock through him before he had had time to recuperate. Dissipation always brings about a premature breakdown, and the final collapse will be preceded by attacks of temporary inconvenience, such as an inability to stand excitement; a giving away before

trials that once could be withstood without seeming inconvenience; shocks from slight provocations, etc., etc. This is nature seeking dissolution, for the purpose of being reverted back to original elements, her peculiar process for purification.

Whether it was conscience making him a coward, or an unconscious reading of what was on Mrs. Adams' mind, no one will know. Science will have to spend many years yet in perfecting a knowledge of telepathy and hypnotism before human influence in all its phases can be explained and understood. Until these finer manifestations of force, or matter, or both, are better comprehended, there can be no equity in law, nor virtue in charity. These two occult forces, which Dr. Fox had consciously and unconsciously used in victimizing his hundreds, have an existence, and form the explanation of much that cannot be understood, and passes current for immorality. *The immoral must find an immoral affinity before expending an influence.* It may be possible that affinities are satisfying a law over which there can be no individual volition. A moral idiot cannot be taught morality, for there is no conception. The same is true of the various functions, for their special objectives.

“Well, Mrs. Adams, this is an unusual hour for you to call.”

“Yes. Since you of late see fit to avoid an interview with me, I have taken it upon myself to come at a time when you cannot concoct an excuse to avoid seeing me.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

The time was when you took pleasure in neglecting your business for me. Then it was that I thought myself of as much consequence to you as you were to me. After all these years of intimacy I find I have been cruelly used as a means to an end—a mean tool to further your selfish purposes. It is true, I have been untrue to myself, to my family, to society, and to my God. I have been true to no one in the world but you, and how miserably you have repaid me! You have fed me with your miserable, flattering, lying platitudes. I have been a disgusting vulture, feeding only upon your filthy, loathsome pratings, that have been nothing but reeking decomposition, the most diabolical rot.

“I once looked upon our intimacy as something holy, for I looked upon your love as pure as mine, and flattered myself into believing that while we were living a life that was rebellious to the common order of social requirements, we were, notwithstanding this, pure and sanctified by mutual honor and honesty. I took pleasure in your prosperity, and gave you all the influence I had to further your success. Your happiness was mine, and your disappointments and heartaches were also mine. With the unmasking of your true character I am stripped of everything life holds dear to me. I do not want to live another day, yet I am not fit to die. I hate myself. My miserable, corrupt life rises up before me, and I see nothing I wish for but annihilation. To believe as I do, that there is a hereafter,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

and that I must spend it in contemplating this life's failures, corruption, and sin, is so overwhelming that I surely shall lose my mind. It would have been kindness in you to have killed me before forever blotting out every vestige of faith in humanity and myself. I do not see why you could not have done me this one act of kindness before suffering my mind to be disabused of my life's ideal. If you had been what I have pictured you for these many years, I could have faced the judgment of eternity in innocence. As it is, I must be damned by you, and for you."

"Mrs. Adams, with all your ranting and incriminating insinuations, I fail to materialize in my mind any excuse for them."

"Do you need me to accuse you? Is your heart so dead, your conscience so asleep, the memory of your diabolical life so paralyzed, that I must remind you of your various fiendish deeds? Oh, don't insult me more by adding an assumed innocence to the multitude of lies you have told me in the past."

"I demand that you explain yourself or cease your abuse."

"If your conscience cannot sufficiently accuse you, and you are so in love with your crimes that nothing will satisfy you but to hear them repeated from my lips, I will gratify you. I was told to-day that you murdered your wife."

“Stop! That is a lie!”

“Mrs. Bassett told me that a number of years ago, just before I became acquainted with you. You were so infatuated with her that you wanted her to marry you, and she would not leave the country with a man who had a wife from whom he could not be divorced. When she told you that she would not go away with you, you became frantic, and declared that you would kill Mrs. Fox; and a short time after that your wife died very suddenly. You then went to Mrs. Bassett and asked her to marry you, and she told you that she would not unless you told her the truth about your wife’s death. She then asked you if you had killed your wife so that you could marry her, and you told her that you had. Whereupon she told you that if you would kill one woman, you would kill another, and that she would not marry you.”

“This is a base falsehood! How did she come to tell you?”

“She told you she would never say anything about it.”

“Why did she?”

“I went to her and asked her if she knew of the reports that were in circulation regarding you and her daughter, Mrs. Benney. She said she did not, and asked me to tell her. I told her I had understood that once she had said she had a secret about Dr. Fox, which, if she told, would go hard with him; and then I said to her, ‘If you will tell me that secret I will tell you what I know and have seen.’ She

told me that she had promised you that she would not, and she felt the promise sacred. But if her daughter's honor had been jeopardized in any way by you, her promise would not hold, for her daughter stood first with her.

“ ‘Your daughter needs protection against that man,’ I said, and I believe what I said. I then told her all.”

“So you went to her with a base lie, and by false statements excited her into making a false statement about me, simply for revenge? I will have you both arrested for blackening my reputation, if you or she dare to mention this farther. The Benneys are satisfied; I proved to them their mistake and they are satisfied.”

“So you succeeded in satisfying a man who saw his wife, that she was not really his wife? You are possessed of the devil. You have always succeeded in making me believe that black was white; but my eyes are open, and I don't intend to rest until I have you publicly disgraced and justly punished, after which I hope I may die. Your threat of having me arrested I do not fear; in fact, I wish you would, for then I could the sooner see you brought to justice. Rest assured that your days of evading justice are drawing very near their end.”

“Mrs. Adams, I am all you have found me out, and more. I have been for years morally abandoned. I started out with pure intentions and high aims. I had not practiced my profession long until I found that, unless I catered to the wishes of the people, I should die a pauper.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

I started to producing foeticide, and I found that, to hold business, I must not only do this, but I must satisfy by flattery and in many cases indulge women in the romance of flirtation. I found that I had a power over most women, and I did not hesitate to exercise it. I prided myself upon the rapidity of my conquests. I often saw women of very good standing succumb to my influence at the first meeting. I have sometimes wondered, when I think of the years gone by, with their conquests, if there is really any virtue in the world. At first it was a novelty. I practiced it as a fine art. I can't say there was really any great pleasure in it, but at all times it proved remunerative to me, for it gave me patients, and thousands of dollars have been paid to me as an excuse to come to me for treatment, for the patients were not sick; their families thought them sick, and I had to charge large fees to help them keep up appearances. I know this to be true of many, very many, other professional men. Some have not the magnetism to succeed that I possess, but in the years of my professional life I have had thousands of confessions, and I find that with the physician, the lawyer, and the minister, and indeed with every other profession that throws men and women together, giving opportunities for the display of this power, the power is used. Where men are inclined this way, opportunity is all that it is necessary; no business is too sacred. I have had women come to me whom I have had every reason to believe were virtuous; but,

pardon my candor, they gave way before the hypnotic influence. I can't account for this condition of affairs. I know one thing, and have noted it often: Show me a loving mother, and I will show you a woman who has the most virtue. On the other hand, show me one who is devoid of this *natural instinct*, and I can show you one who wears her virtue easily. Every man of personal influence—magnetism—is a hypnotist to a certain extent. The hypnotic influence varies in degree, from a slight control to the complete annihilation of volition. This influence is not understood by the public. It is only the gross manifestations that attract attention; but the harm coming from this influence is not confined to the limited number of operators and subjects on exhibition for demonstrating the peculiarity of the occult force. It is in the unconscious operations of this law of suggestion and control that the danger lies. Every man and every woman has individually this power, which is limited in its range of action to those of a corresponding affinity. The range of power varies in each individual. Some have but little, and a small number possess it to an unlimited extent. Those with full power can bring all under their control, when given the proper environments, and to censure a poor woman for being a victim is no better then to find fault with her for becoming sleepy, cold, too warm, or breathing; over any of which influences she has no control, or only partial, if at all.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I have a secret to add to this acknowledgement, or confession of mine, which I have not told you. I was an illegitimate child. My father was an English nobleman, and my mother the only daughter of a widowed mother. What little money my grandfather left was spent in giving my mother sufficient education to fit her for school teaching, which she did for the support of herself and her mother. The Englishman made love to her, and she was flattered by his attentions, so that she would receive him in spite of the protestations of her mother. The result was she became *enceinte*, and her lover abandoned her. She did everything to cut me off before my time, and failed. When I was born she wrapped me up and put me in a wooded pasture, thinking the hogs that were kept in it would devour me, but before they had discovered me a young man happened to find me, and became my foster father. I never knew anything of my origin until I was a physician thirty-five years old. My mother committed suicide a few years after my birth. This being my origin, what could you expect of me but a blot on society? How could I be different? My drifting into corruption has been an easy matter. Cursed before birth, I must of necessity be a curse after. I owe the world nothing; the world owes me nothing, for I have been revenged. I was born an alien, have lived an alien, and will die an alien. I have had no rights, I have usurped the right to revenge, and when I am gone nature can be avenged of me. I have done noth-

ing in my life that I am sorry for except the blasting of your life. Do with me as you like. I must confess I have found but little pleasure in all my fiendish life. What I now do is from habit. There is nothing to live for and nothing to die for."

"Dr. Fox, I am sorry for you. Your life could not have been different. You have ruined mine, but you have sufficient curse upon you without my adding more. I go away from you forever, and shall try to live the rest of my life for the family I have so cruelly outraged. Mrs. Bassett, no doubt, will make you trouble, but I wash my hands of anything farther. I can only remember you as an evil dream, but will always pity you, and hope God will pity us both."

Mrs. Adams had only just gone out of the office when Mrs. Bassett came in.

"Dr. Fox, I have just heard of your conduct with my daughter. I came to give you warning. I intend to tell the secret I have held over you so long, so that you will be put where my daughter will be safe from your influence."

"I can save you the trouble, if you will give me five minutes to kill myself."

Saying this, he took up a spraying apparatus, and began to throw out a fine mist, which occasionally he would turn into her face, but as he appeared to be inhaling many times as much as she got from the occasional sprays he passed to her, she did not feel alarmed. Besides, she

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

thought he was dissembling, and was not using anything that would hurt him or herself. In a few minutes she began to have a dizzy feeling, and unconsciousness followed.

In a very short time the doctor had his galvano-cautery at work, and, with the white-heat needle, he burnt into the skull at the base of the brain. After making a very small opening in the bone, he took a small pin and passed it into the opening, and covered the projecting end with her hair. A restorative was given and her stupor passed off. The effect was so peculiar that she did not realize that she had been unconscious; hence she did not seem to be aware that there had been a break in their conversation.

“You may destroy yourself if you like, but I am not afraid of your doing so, for I believe you to be a coward.”

“Mrs. Bassett, I am desperate. I have had much to worry me of late, and all I have to say to you is, go and do your worst.”

“I shall do so. I will attend to this to-morrow morning.”

“Very well, I wish you success.”

SEVENTEENTH.

ROBERT BENNEY CALLS UPON DR. HEADLY. DR. HEADLY EXPATIATES UPON SEXUALITY AND HUMAN WEAKNESSES: HIS OPINION OF THE STATUS OF THE PROFESSION, AND HOW IT SHOULD BE PRACTICED.

Robert Benney had not enjoyed his renewed domestic happiness long before he thought of his old friend, Dr. Headly, and embraced the first opportunity to call upon him. He found the doctor busy with his microscope, as usual, and exclaimed, as he entered the office:

“There you are, communing with a world of objects with which common people are not acquainted. It must be a great luxury to live in three worlds at once. You can take that microscope and spend a time in the world of the infinitely small; then, when desirous of a change, you can go to the telescope and spend a time with the infinitely large; and when satisfied with these two worlds, you can recreate with us in this common, everyday world. There must be much more in your life than I can ever hope to have in mine. By the use of the microscope, telescope, spectroscope, laryngoscope, pharyngoscope, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, rhinoscope, auroscope, endoscope, and various

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

other scopes, a man of scope must have a greater scope, when he can scope in, with all these scopes, all there is to scope of the Great unknowable scope."

"There you go, punning as usual. One would think you happy again."

"I am, doctor. Everything is lovely at home. I made a great ass of myself, thinking I saw Mrs. Benney the night of the masque ball, but she had an alibi proven without her knowledge; in fact, before she was accused."

"I am glad you were mistaken, and very glad you have come to a good understanding with Mrs. Benney. I hope nothing more will occur to mar your happiness in a domestic way."

"Thank you, doctor; I intend to keep foolish ideas out of my head. By the way, doctor, what have you there that interests you so much?"

"This microscopical specimen was taken from the lip of a lady; the case was sent to me for diagnosis. The doctor whose patient the lady is was in doubt as to whether he had a case of cancer or one of syphilis to deal with."

"And what do you find it to be?"

"Her disease is syphilis."

"How do people get syphilis on the lip?"

"By kissing, usually. This woman is the wife of a prominent gentleman of this city, and they have not been married more than six months."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Do you think she contracted the disease from her husband?”

“She tells me he is troubled with sore throat, and I infer from that that he has the disease.”

“Why do men marry while suffering from such a loathsome disease?”

“Doctors are often to blame for it, for such cases usually get the opinion of a doctor, and all doctors are not competent to judge.”

“Do many people have the disease?”

“More than people out of the profession know or would be willing to believe.”

“Will you tell her what her disease is?”

“No; I never tell under such circumstances; it would cause much trouble, and do no good.”

“Doctors have many secrets to keep.”

“Yes. If a doctor who has been practicing twenty-five years in a community should tell all he knows it would shake a city from center to circumference. The physician who is a destroyer of families, by imposing upon the trust and confidence placed in him, is a lecherous, threacherous demon. He is worse than the abandoned priest or clergyman, for he is the constant adviser when his clients are in their weakest state of mind. Either, if they are villainous enough, can sow the seeds of corruption to be reaped in health. Many splendid women are ruined by a venereal disease contracted from their husbands, and many men

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

have wives who could not face their records.”

“I supposed such diseases were confined to people who live libidinous lives.”

“I wish it were true. I see young women who have been taken in by some debauched fiend ruined by this loathsome disease; young wives who date their lost health back to the time of marriage. Men who are the authors of such ruin are often prominent and a power in the community.”

“What makes people so base? There must be a cause for it.”

“The great majority of people are born in lust. People get married as often to satisfy lustful desires as to take upon themselves the responsibility of a family. Such husbands, in fact most husbands, from the highest to the lowest in society, will not permit their wives to rest during the *enceinte* period; and some are so beastish as to exhaust the vital force of the mother by such frequent assaults that, if she does not abort, the child will be weak and delicate, and when half grown up will show lustful precocity, and, long before the age of maturity, will have lost its virtue. Many such fathers will not be satisfied at home, but commit excesses in many illegitimate ways. You will find such growing prematurely old; they become afflicted with nervous diseases, and when syphilis is added to their sexual excesses, look out for chronic diseases of brain, spinal cord, kidneys, lungs, heart, stomach, etc. Many

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

consumptives hurry themselves off by excess; people predisposed to consumption give way to lustful indulgence for a few years, following which, and often in a very short time, their vital force breaks down, and they are then soon in the last stages of consumption. In women, excess produces leucorrhœa, hemorrhages, ulcers, tumors, cancers, sterility, anæmia, abortions, and hysteria. A great amount of trouble comes to men, for the sperm is the most important secretion of the body; it is the pure extract of the blood, and with each act there is an orgasm which amounts to a convulsion. If every man could understand that each act is a convulsion, which affects the whole nervous system, and tends to undermine the brain and affect the intelligence, surely more care would be used in squandering vital force. It is a provision of nature that procreation means death to the life-imparting substance: to create means death to the creator; hence this process should be confined to its legitimate sphere, and not perverted into an illegitimate practice, as we see it on every hand. If it were not for this perversion of a physiological, life-giving process into a diabolical pathological luxury, man's life would be short at the age we now recognize it as long. The act has been known to kill in men who have lived fast lives. Cases are on record where old men have died from the excitement caused by illegitimate indulgence. It is very dangerous to the old to become excited, as they only can by seeking illegitimate excitement. Many sudden

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

deaths are caused by orgasms in old and prematurely old men, whom the public think die of heart disease apoplexy, etc.

“I ought not to tell you, but I will; your father-in-law died under compromising circumstances with his mistress; of course the report went out that his death was from heart failure, and that is all you know about it, but I was called to treat his mistress for nervous shock, and she told me what caused it. He was a man fifty-five years of age, and known *sub-rosa* as a fast man; he was twenty years older than his wife; and your wife was born to them in the first years of their marriage. Your wife takes her fine physique from him; he was a handsome man.”

“This frightens me, doctor. I did not know Mrs. Benney’s father was such a man.”

“Few men in the city were more respected; he was a society gentleman, well educated and much honored.”

“How are people to know the good from the bad?”

“I would not advise you to try; believe every man a gentleman, and every woman a lady, till you find they are not; then do not censure them too strongly; remember that there is a good and sufficient reason for their conduct. You cannot expect figs from thistles. You should be thankful that you have been fortunate in having good parents to inherit from, and feel sorry for those less fortunate. As for people knowing anything about their neighbors,

how can they, when the hiding of indiscretions has become a fine art—a science?”

“I do not understand you.”

“Among all classes there is hypocrisy; but we must look to the wealthy for the diabolical fine art of appearing what they are not. Wealth and influence cover a multitude of sins; but to protect themselves from themselves, the art of hiding indiscretions has become a science. When an accident happens with this class of people, such as would blast a young woman’s life forever in the middle classes, there is so much at stake, in the way of reputation and wealth, that something must be done to avert the calamity. A physician is employed at a handsome sum to engage in malpractice, and then, last of all, traces of the indiscretion must be obliterated by a delicate surgical operation.”

“Doctor, this is positively nauseating.”

“Well, Robert, you see, these young people have much at stake. A desirable marriage is necessary, and if such a contract is entered into without due care as to the appearances of virginity, much trouble might follow. The young gentlemen who are most likely to honor these young ladies with their names are not only prominent and wealthy, but they have a knowledge of the world so exact that they would easily detect an otherwise hidden mystery.”

“Under such circumstances neither is imposed upon.”

“The worst young women are better than the best of

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

such young men. In *bon ton* society there are many carefully cultivated young women; they are attended so closely that they are as pure as angels when they get married; but in many cases whom do they get? Frequently the wedding day must be postponed on account of an indisposition of the *fiancee*, or if marriage is consummated, the bride will be in the throes of a specific disease in a short time after that may ruin her for life. The physician who is called will probably be a friend of the husband, and of course understands the case; the disease may be controlled before it passes to the ovaries, if not, the disease may go from bad to worse till a surgeon is called, and the beautiful woman of a few months ago will be wreck for life. If the disease is controlled before ending so disastrously, this young doctor friend may give the young wife a hint as to the cause of her illness, swearing her beforehand not to betray him; this ends in blasting her confidence in her husband, and with this nucleus of corruption sown in her mind she will soon be in a fine moral condition to take revenge upon that husband by plunging into any vice that presents itself. When a doctor will do such a thing as this he has evil designs, and has a most fertile field in which to work. Again, *this very desirable fiancee* may have a mistress or two to dispose of before marrying, and the young wife soon finds, much to her sorrow, that she must divide her husband with others."

"Before I forget it, you told me of the dangers of

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

illicit gratification of lust on the part of the old and the prematurely old; tell me of the effect on the young."

"Very many young men, in fact most young men, blast their lives to a certain extent by excess. If you keep your eyes open you will see, by the time you are my age, little boys, young men and girls, with bright, active minds; everyone that knows them has predicted a bright future for them, but alas! they stop—they appear to have an intellectual blight; the mind comes to a standstill; the cause is sexual. Many bright young doctors, lawyers, and ministers start out in life with brilliant promise; but forty-five years of age finds them where they were at twenty-five; the cause is sexual excess; it blights the mind, and the victim stands still. This is not confined to professional men; it is the same in a business life—in a working man's life; energy is gone and life drags; the power to work is lost, and life stands still.

"I remember in my schoolboy days five very smart boys. They were the pride of the school, and I envied them their bright, sparkling intellect. I met them in after years—ten to twenty years after those school-days. Two were working for one dollar and a half a day at menial labor, the others were in the professions; started out with great meteoric show, but the gratification of lust has bound them hand and foot, and they are plodding along at a snail's gait; when they all had the brain capacity (before exhausting it) to take a leading part in the world's affairs.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

Thousands of bright young men blast their intellectual powers within five years after they reach manhood; many much earlier."

"Is the evil general?"

"Yes. I believe I am safe in saying that one-tenth of the present indulgence would be beyond nature's design. Our best people could reach a higher mark, socially, morally, and intellectually, if indulgences were curtailed eighty per cent. That pale face you often see with young people is indicative of a wrong life. A ruddy complexion between twenty five and fifty years of age often disguises a sexual debauchee. The victim will look with complacency upon his ruddy complexion and rotundity of form, flattering himself that a pendulous abdomen and plethoric veins indicate superior health, when in fact it often means excess in gratifying lustful desires and morbid appetites, and possibly only precedes apoplexy, or some other fatal malady, a few months or years.

"People will not take warning until it is everlastingly too late. The bright boy of whom the father expects to make a lawyer and judge, is disappointed on account of lust, which has sapped his energies and made a commonplace boy of him. That young lawyer who electrifies his hearers with his maiden effort, and sends everyone guessing him into the United States Senate in a short time, becomes pale and haggard; his friends say he is studying too hard. If he is, nothing comes of it; he gets just so far and blasts,

and grows old where he stands.

“There are delicate men who are never sick and never well; who are troubled with their stomachs; many die from thirty-five to fifty-five years of age. If they would give up lust in time, their lives would be useful and pleasurable.”

“What effect does such a life have on the social nature of man?”

“It has a tendency to sour the disposition; ambitious men fall so far below their ideal and their original expectations that they become ascetic, and, being in ignorance of the true cause of their failures, they become pessimistic, and look upon life as a failure. Such iniquitous lives blast forever the tender sentiments; candour and virtue are lost; the sweet emotions of true love are gone, and life is a troubled dream, with occasional vistas through which the victims catch glimpses of what might have been. He who is satiated with the gross pleasures of early onanism, followed by excess in legitimate or illegitimate love, can never enjoy the sweet poetry of the soul; he knows no longer what love is; there is a sort of lustful infatuation that is disgusted on the instant of gratification; his victims feel his bitterness, his disgust. Many such men are fiends in their families; an occasional mock sweetness comes, which quickly vanishes, leaving bitter disappointment to the loved ones.”

“Why is it that men like you, who know so much of

life, do not write a book, and tell people all you know? I am sure that many people would live differently if they knew how. You can't expect people to live right when they do not know the right."

"True. Everyone should know all I have told you. Books with facts, stripped of their conventional coverings, should be in the family, and every young woman and young man should read them; but false modesty demands that books should be sent into families devoid of all language save the most chaste, and the very subjects of which the young should know the most are of such a nature that they cannot be so written that the foolish modest parents will not think them unfit for their children. Most people will keep their boys and girls in such gross ignorance that they fall before the first temptation, not knowing the danger until after it is too late. I have seen thousands of unfortunate people in my life who have bewailed the misfortune of gaining their knowledge too late. How often my heart has ached for beautiful young women and noble young men, when I heard them say: 'Oh, if my parents had only told me!—if I could have known the danger before my life was ruined!' What the people want is more knowledge; but how they are to get it, is the question. The old are as bad off as the young; all classes have their special dangers, and neither class knows until too late, and most of them not at all."

"Doctor, I wish you could make up your mind to

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

write a book on this subject telling all you know. I believe knowledge is the only thing that will help people to regulate their lives, so that the generations to come can inherit something besides evil."

"A book written as you suggest would be suppressed."

"I think you are mistaken, doctor. I believe most people would be, like myself, glad to know human faults, so as to be improved by the knowledge."

"I know it is badly needed, for evading, cowering, and hiding from publicity cultivates moral idiocy; and that is just what society is doing. A letting down in any one direction lowers the tone of virtue in every other. The world is sadly in need of knowledge, for those who know are prevented from speaking the truth,—it would be impolitic; and, on the other hand, the inexperienced world is not ready to believe the worst, and will be ready to join those who, for reasons best known to themselves, would rather have the facts ignored. Those who spend their lives in reveling in social rottenness will be loudest in their denunciation of the man who, with his pen for a stiletto, stabs the social system in a spot where decomposition has taken place, and allows some of the sulphuretted hydrogen gas to escape. The odoriferous rot will strike dismay to the unsuspecting, but their protestations will be as nothing compared with the vociferous utterances of those interested in a suppression. With those who, from worldly observation, have developed power of discrimination, it will be an easy

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

matter to detect those with a record, for they will be seen with handkerchiefs stuffed into their nostrils, retching and fainting at a stench to which their olfactories have become so accustomed that they would not know anything unusual had happened, were it not for the unfeigned look of surprise on the visages of those who are too innocent to realize that they are not dreaming. These culture mediæ of social decomposition will join hands in denouncing the individual who points out for public gaze the social condition, and will brand him as a seditious, a fool who paints his own picture and writes another's name under it—a traducer of the virtue of the social mind—a ranting lunatic. These people are the first to cry out 'suppression,' and their adeptness at passing off for pure-minded people meets with such success that the warning voice will be made the embodiment of its own portraying, and very soon any ripple of healthful influence coming from the exposure will die out, and down society sinks into a worse condition than before. The health officer is not as fearful of the loud, boisterous stench as of the insidious sewer gas that represents just so much quintessence of destruction. The barking dog seldom bites; the despised ten-per-cent per-month tax-gatherer never hides his business nor his name, and prefers the interest to the security. The highwayman only wants your valuables, and is content to leave you your good name, for he has no use for it; but these mock-modest howlers for pure literature, whose purity is on a par

with the hellhounds that were begotten of that most foul and unnatural rape of sin by death (so graphically described by that peerless prince of the pen, Milton), are not satisfied short of a complete destruction of all protection to the innocent and virtuous, and, the better to further the accomplishment of this vile purpose, they support by every invention the barriers to true knowledge by affecting naively to advocate pure literature, which is another name for keeping the masses ignorant. As long as ignorance is purity, books for enlightenment will not be wanted."

"I presume that if one man should attempt to write up and expose corruption, his efforts would come to naught; but there should be a preconcerted arrangement to make the attack from all the special points of view. All the professions, arts, and trades should have a book written from each department, giving the public a true knowledge of the pitfalls. Forwarned is forearmed, and the people should be cautioned and made to recognize the moral leper in all his disguises. I think people who can should feel it their duty to do this. We spend money and time in fighting against disease and death in a sanitary way; why should there not be the same amount of money and time spent in hunting out the causes of moral disease?"

"True, my boy; but your ideas belong to the idealistic, and can never be practical. You saw that young woman who just passed the door? Several months ago she came to me all broken down in health, and without money. I read between

lines the cause of her trouble; her disease required local treatment. I felt so much interested in her that I gave her good attention, and did not make her feel miserable by reading her life to her. I permitted her to believe that I had faith in her. She had been taken advantage of by a prominent and well-respected man of the city. She had become *enceinte*, and some one had helped her to hide her indiscretion, which had left her with the disease for which I was called upon to treat her. I knew she had resolved to lead a different life, and I encouraged her by never permitting her to see by look or word that I had read her secret. She called upon me yesterday on her way from taking a music lesson, for occasionally I have her report to me and I do whatever is necessary to prevent her from relapsing. During the examination she remarked that she had just taken a music lesson. I asked her the name of her teacher, and she told me his name was Prof. ————. I said to her- ‘He has the reputation of being a good teacher.’ ‘Yes, a very fine teacher.’ When she left the office I felt discouraged, and could not but think how utterly useless it is to help people to be good. There were evidences of a recent relapse into her old indiscretion. In this case there had never been one word of direct testimony about her life, but I have read it, and I know her fall, her attempt to recover, and then another fall; and in both cases influenced by men whom the public trust with the important duty of cultivating the young. I know the

life and morals of every public man in this city who has been here any length of time, and in the majority of instances not one word has been spoken to me directly for or against them. The intuitive reading of the lives of my patients, and those who are connected with them, becomes as easy as to read out of books; and better, for the biography I get this way is truth, and in a written biography there is only part of the truth.

“There is another cause which would make unpopular a book such as you advise me to write. Husbands and wives would know each other better. Husbands who succeed in an immoral life because of the ignorance of the wife, and *vice versa*, would not want such a book about the house, for it would open the eyes of the innocent, and put them on their guard about being imposed upon. Again, I should have to write it from the standpoint of a physician, and to do the subject justice I should be compelled to say unpleasant things about physicians, and that would be very unpopular. If I tell husbands that they should object to their wives going to a doctor for treatment (which is a great fad nowadays) without a lady friend or himself accompanying her, the husband, the doctor, and the wife would be offended, and would denounce me. If I should tell people that doctors who are willing to accommodate them in any immoral or criminal practice they may desire, are not to be trusted, they will look upon me as a bad man; for everybody recognizes his doctor as all right—

next to the preacher. Often they are. I believe doctors, as a class, are the largest-hearted men in the world; but they are human, and are liable to fall. Be they good, bad, or indifferent, women should not make a practice of going to see them without a companion. This is at least a decent suggestion, and should be observed. The people should not compel the doctors to make this demand, for it is a delicate point, and one that no lady should ignore.

“I have known of much trouble coming from the jealousy of the husband, because of the great regard of the wife for her physician. This should not be, for lost confidence in a family is seldom overcome entirely. It often ruins people for life to discover, or think they have discovered, impurity. Unfaithfulness on the part of either husband or wife means death to domestic happiness.”

“Do you think there is much immorality among physicians?”

“As a physician I should not be compelled to answer such a question. It is true, no one can answer the question as truthfully as a physician; but loyalty to the profession should deter, if nothing more. Inasmuch as you ask me, I will speak the truth as I know it. There are many physicians, and they are human; they are endowed with the strength and the weaknesses of humanity. In such an army of men there must of necessity be all kinds of characters. There are everywhere a few grand, noble, high-minded, virtuous men, but there are also a great number

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

who have been cursed with bad inheritances; and no field of labor furnishes such a quickening power to the immoral nature as the practice of medicine, for there is an unnatural commingling of men and women in this department of life-work that gives a great opportunity for the development of a lustful nature. I believe from what I have seen in a long and busy life that more seeds of corruption are sown, directly and indirectly, by doctors, than in any other department of the business world."

"Can it be possible? I thought care was exercised by all colleges in keeping undesirable characters out of the profession."

"I know that is the prevailing opinion, but there are so many colleges, and the competition so sharp, a good percentage of them would be compelled to close their doors if restricted to desirable students. The matriculation fee is of more importance than the quality and character of the neophyte; besides, if a college requires morality on the part of the students, some care should be exercised to have professorships filled with men who are moral."

"Doctor, you do not wish me to infer that such is not the case?"

"Morality has but little to do with professorships; of course some pretension to the possession of such qualities is expected, but not required. The profession is not to blame, necessity evolves its requirements. Society has evolved the profession, and the profession in turn has

evolved its social requirements. It is a little absurd, however, to find in college announcements, the requirement, that a student must possess a good moral character, otherwise he is not eligible to graduation, when it would be difficult to find a college faculty which does not show a good percentage of its teachers immoral, notwithstanding the fact that most of them hold a membership in some popular church, and are found doing the pious act to the queen's taste among those Christians who have a penchant for employing only physicians who "belong to our church." It does not matter how professionally ignorant or incompetent a physician is, so long as he "belongs to our church." This is pernicious in its effects, and offers a premium on ignorance and hypocrisy. It is not strange that men who have no individuality nor independence,—who lack honor, honesty and industry, and are too cowardly to think out loud, should be found safely ensconced in the fold of some church, receiving a patronage they could not receive in an open, meritorious contest with honest men who are too proud to play the hypocrite, even for reward. It does not take young men long to find out that morality is not a necessary accompaniment to Christianity or religion;—that a membership in a popular church can be maintained at a reasonable outlay, and that the church is a safe place in which to take refuge, for it secures to a professional man a following, and shields him from criticism if there should be any one incredulous enough to suspect his morals.

“It is not hard to find young physicians who have taken their first licentious cue from some professor who is lionized for his professional skill, and admired for his piety by his church, and whose revenue depends upon his success in keeping up this hypocritical life. Skilled as these men are in deception, it is a miracle if the young men who are under their tutorage for three or four years in college do not divine their second-self, so artfully concealed from the public as to allow only the mask and not the man to be seen. A certain percentage of medical students, as well as other students, are cursed before birth by a lustful nature, and all they need to send them pellmell into excesses, is to discover in those of good reputation a moral flaw. Nothing sends young men drifting with their inclinations like the discovery of vileness in some one whom they have been taught to respect and admire. There is a certain percentage of young men who choose the medical profession for no other reason than that it offers the best opportunities for the indulgence of their morbid, lustful natures. This is a strong assertion, and I feel the full meaning of it, but I make it advisedly. Occasionally we hear of one through the daily news, whose sins have found him out, and the strong arm of the law interposes to prevent a confiding public from being imposed upon, but the number of similar characters who escape detection are legions.

“So long as the practice of medicine is a business out of which to make money, its rank and file must be largely

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

recruited from men with low, selfish propensities, and the dear people will be fed upon superstition, and their sensual natures catered to for the purpose of debauching them financially and morally. When human weaknesses enter the world's mart to be bartered with, the brokers will manipulate the commodity to their greatest advantage. Honest manipulation will be the exception and not the rule. Ignorance or knavery promises the greatest reward."

"Doctor, this is a calamitous condition. You destroy my ideal of your noble profession."

"I cannot help that. I am not responsible for what truth does, neither will I juggle with it for the sake of currying favor. I have been loath to accept the facts myself, but they have forced themselves upon me.

"The profession with all its boasting of royal attainments is really in its decadence; it is not keeping up with the requirements of the age, evidenced by the thousand-and-one healing systems which are multiplying yearly. The scientific discoveries which are loudly heralded to the world, are fraught with more bane than cure, or prove in a short time after their discovery to be potent with impotency. Of course I know what I say is equivalent to a modicum of down in a cyclone, as compared with the great world of opinion in opposition to mine, but if due allowance be made for the infinity of interestedness which opposition opinion possesses, and the sordid selfishness which incapacitates for grasping an idea which

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

runs counter to self-interest, etc., my opinion will not be so hopelessly lost in the great world of medical fallacy. The manner of professional procedure in cultivating the sick habit shows to what disgusting depths avarice has sunk the profession. Take for example, anxious mothers bringing their beautiful, pampered, over-indulged daughters to the doctor to have his opinion upon a menstrual irregularity, due in the majority of instances to indigestion from irregular and improper eating, irregular sleep, and lack of discipline in every way. If the doctor is an honest man, he will proscribe the irregular life and prescribe a proper diet, rest, etc., and tell the mother to go home with her child and forget her fears, for everything will come around all right under the proper home-life. If he is a fiend, and desires to rob the mother of her money, and the daughter of her modesty, he will ominously shake his head, and draw a frightful picture of the great danger the girl is in from displacement or some other as preposterous disease, and, before sending his victims away, will outrage the child by making an unnecessary examination of her, and contract for a month or two of this fiendish professional service. At the end of this term of treatment, the girl will have lost her modesty, all evidences of her virginity, and possibly her virtue. For a man who will deliberately impose unnecessary services for the lucre he can get will not hesitate to deprive a young girl of her virtue. This is a dis-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

gusting picture, but it is true to life. The way young wives are brought under the demoralizing influence of the medical profession is through their perverted ideas as to marital responsibilities—their desire to shirk responsibility.

“The hundred-and-one foolish and dangerous procedures for cheating nature’s designs emanate from professional men, who have more fiendish ignorance than medical knowledge. The sickness, unhappiness, depravity, and death caused by the medical profession, directly and indirectly, very largely overbalance all the good that comes from it. One popular but dishonest physician can do more harm to the living and yet-to-be-born than can be counterpoised by ten honest ones.”

“Doctor, your argument robs the people of all their cherished faith in medicine. What have you to suggest? The sick must have relief, how are they to get it?”

“The world will probably move in the same old way; necessity will struggle on and on with its weight of stupidity and ignorance, making gains from time to time, but there is no hope of it ever keeping pace with its more powerful foe—selfishness. The people must be educated, but so long as there is more profit in ignorance, truth will be throttled. The present mode of practicing medicine should be abolished; public hospitals should be built of sufficient capacity to accommodate all, and the people should be taxed for their support; the physicians employed should be paid from the public fund; no private fees

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

should be allowed; this would remove the temptation to deceive the sick and educate them into the sick habit which is being done constantly. The treatment in these hospitals should be rest, diet and discipline; medicine would cease to be the *sine qua non*. The public schools should teach hygiene and cookery, and a physician should be employed to do this work. A physician should be employed to inspect homes for the purpose of enforcing cleanliness, proper cooking, and to look after the manner of dress. The poor should be looked after and made comfortable, for a family too poor to live comfortable becomes a menace to the health of the community. As soon as a member of a family is taken ill, removal to the hospital should take place at once. It is a great mistake to have the sick cared of by friends who have more foolish sympathy than knowledge. Fear is a great complication in all diseases, and ignorant sympathy scares some people to death. Few feel the importance of following instruction closely; and many people imagine they have some special power for relieving suffering, and will exercise it to the bane of the sufferer. In removing the sick to a hospital they are taken away from all such influences. Many more suggestions could be added to these, but this is sufficient to give you my idea. If this plan was carried out, prostrations from sickness would be the exception, and not as now, the rule. Three-fourths of the physicians could go into other pursuits where they would do less harm, if not more good, and the world would become healthier, happier, and wiser. Enough money would be saved, which is now spent in cultivating the sick habit, to improve the homes, food, and clothing of the poor so that diseases due to poverty and ignorance would be stamped out."

EIGHTEENTH.

DR. FOX'S PLAN FOR THE DEATH OF MRS. BASSETT WAS TO HIM
A GRAND SUCCESS, BUT IS THE CAUSE OF HIS DOWNFALL. THE
WEIGHT OF HIS CRIMINAL LIFE IS BRINGING HIM DOWN. MRS.
BASSETT'S ANTE-MORTEM STATEMENT TO HER DAUGHTER. MRS.
BENNEY'S RESOLUTION.

Mrs. Bassett returned home and found Mrs. Adams waiting for her.

“Have you seen Dr. Fox, Mrs. Bassett?”

“I have just come from his office. I told him what I intended to do.”

“Did he protest?”

“No, he took it with indifference, and told me to go and do my worst, and said he wished me success.”

“Such abandon would indicate that he intended to make way with himself, would it not?”

“He is too much of a coward. A man who has done as he has will not kill himself.”

“Inasmuch as this murder was committed a long time ago, would it not be well to let it rest, Mrs. Bassett?”

“No, not now, since I have found him attempting to ruin my daughter.”

“Would it not be well to tell him that you will sus-

pend your intention of carrying out your threat, if he will promise to let Mrs. Benney alone in the future?"

"I have no confidence in him. He will promise anything, but what are his promises worth? He has no honor, and I could not watch him all the time, and, before I knew anything about it, he would have my daughter's life ruined. He is a dangerous man. He has some personal influence, that acts like a spell upon those he chooses to influence, and they are slaves to his bidding. I have been more watchful of him than it would be natural for other people to be, for once having been in love with him, and knowing him to be a murderer, I have always felt afraid of him. My love for him was blotted out instantly when I knew of his fiendish murder of his wife, and I did not know all these years but what he would sometime think it to his interest to kill me, to prevent exposure. I have always employed him for our physician, but I would not take a dose of his medicine unless he gave me a prescription that I could have filled by a druggist. I have often suffered great pain, but I would not allow him to give me a hypodermic injection, fearing he would kill me. My life, since that murder has been one of vigilance, and I shall feel relieved when he is disposed of in some way."

"I wish you could think of this matter differently, and conclude to put him on his honor."

"He has no honor. If it were not that I have known



Mrs. Bassett threw her head back against the head-rest of the chair.—Page 225.

you so long, I should suspect that you were under his spell."

"I feel that I am the cause of all this trouble, and I do not like to know that I have been instrumental in bringing him to justice."

"He is no better than other people. I can't see why he should not suffer the penalty of his crime the same as other people."

"If I had no hand in it I could stand it better. Please reconsider your resolution."

"And you, Mrs. Adams,—of all women I know, I would least suspect you of being in love with him."

"Yes, Mrs. Bassett, I am. I may as well acknowledge it, and I have been for years. I do not owe it to him to intercede, but I must. I cannot have him suffer on my account."

"So it was jealousy that brought you to me in the first place?"

"I suppose it was."

"Well, I am determined, and his conquest of you makes me feel it a duty more strongly than before; for if a strong-minded woman like you can be controlled by him, the sooner he is out of the way the better; so do not protest further; I am determined."

"In emphasizing her last remark Mrs. Bassett threw her head back against the head-rest of the chair, gave a look of wild, anxious surprise, and fell heavily to the floor.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

A gasp, a momentary struggle, and Mrs. Bassett was dead!

Mrs. Adams was so overcome with fright that she could not move for some little time. When she did she called a servant, and sent word to neighbors, and had Dr. Fox telephoned for. The doctor came in and pronounced her trouble heart-failure. In a few minutes Robert Benney and his wife came in. Mrs. Benney became hysterical when told by the doctor that her mother was dead, and that the cause of death was heart-failure.

"It is no surprise to me," said the doctor, "for I have treated her for years for heart trouble, and I knew it would end in this way sooner or later."

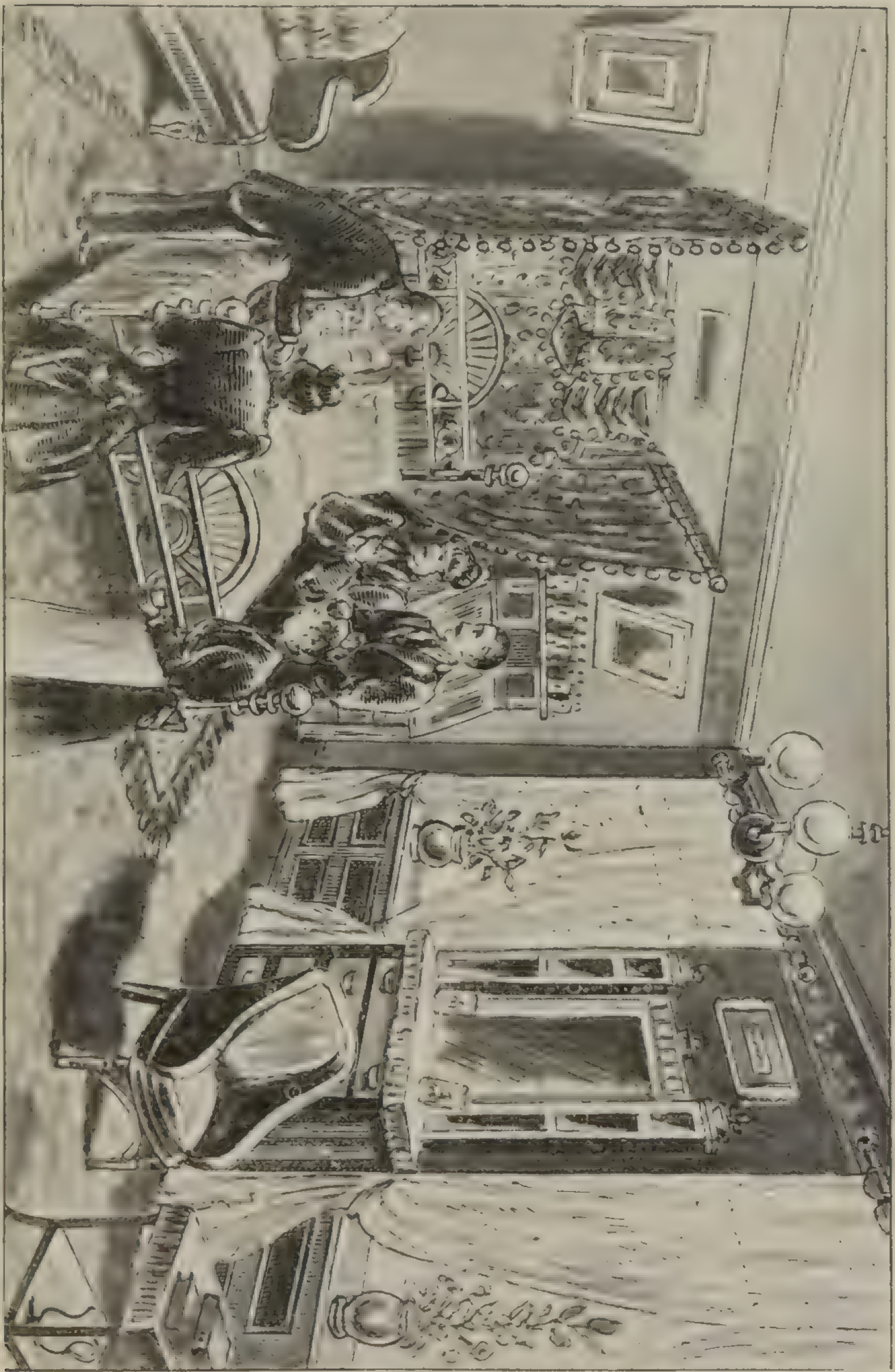
The coroner had been telephoned for, and upon his arrival demanded an inquest, but Dr. Fox insisted that the cause of death was known to him, and her only daughter opposed it. The death certificate was made out "heart-disease," and the community was satisfied. Crime once more triumphed, and a criminal escaped justice.

Mrs. Bassett bequeathed everything to her daughter, Mrs. Robert Benney, Jr. There was an envelope among her private papers addressed to Mrs. Benney, with a request written upon it that the seal should not be broken for one month after her (Mrs. Bassett's) death.

The month passed, and Mrs. Benney opened the envelope and read the following:

"My dear Daughter:

"I am going down to Dr. Fox's office to-day to warn him of my intention of going to the State's Attorney, and telling that officer



Mrs. Bassett's death certificate was made out "heart disease."—Page 226.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

the secret I have held concerning him—the doctor—so long. The nature of his crime, when committed, etc., you will find written out in detail under a separate cover, and every word of it is true. I am going to do this to save you from him. I know all that has happened between him and yourself. He is a desperate man. I don't know whether I will live to get home after seeing him or not, and that is my reason for writing this. If I die very suddenly after seeing him, or at his office, you may be sure of foul play, for I am in the best of health. If there is anything the matter with me, I am ignorant of it. I am under no treatment, and have not been. If I should die suddenly, by all means have my body examined, for Dr. Fox is capable of committing the most terrible crimes.

“Now, dear daughter, regarding the intimacy between you and Dr. Fox: If you prize future happiness in this life, as well as in the life to come, stop at once. You have a splendid husband. If he desires you to have a family, do so. My word for it, it will be a blessing to you. If it keeps you at home, the time lost from pleasures will also be lost opportunities for cultivating discontent and falling into temptations, which will surely drag you down. I have never talked to you about this, because I knew you would say to me that I had better have practiced what I preach. I acknowledge that I have done wrong; I opposed your father the same as you are opposing Mr. Benney, and I have regretted it a thousand times. If I had done my whole duty he no doubt would have lived a different life, and possibly would have lived longer.

“Don't make my mistakes. Dr. Headly gave me the only proper advice I ever had given me, and to his advice and his stolidity of character you owe your life. For if I had known Dr. Fox at that time, no doubt you would have been cut off. I would write you much more if I knew this would be my last communication. Possibly my fears are ill-founded; but if the worst comes to the worst, heed what I have written you.

“Never meet him if you can avoid it, for he has destroyed many homes. If I do not live to see you again, remember that I lose my life in an effort to save your honor and happiness. Inasmuch as my inordinate desire for pleasure (pleasure that does not exist) has caused me to neglect you and leave your training to other people,—caused me to shirk my responsibility,—I take pleasure in sacrificing myself, if necessary, for you. It is all I can do. It would have been better for you, and for me, if I had devoted my life, which has been given to false pleasures, to you, but as I did not, I go cheerfully and willingly into what in all probability will be my death, *to save you*. Don't let my sacrifice be in vain.

“Your loving and anxious mother,

“MARY BASSETT.”

Mrs. Benney was alone when she read this letter. She never had felt the affection of her mother before, and between her hysterical sobbings she said to herself:

“Poor mother! Why could you not let me know that you loved me, before you died? You did love me, or you would not have died to save me. I would have given the world for this much assurance from your lips. Oh, poor mother! I will avenge your death. That villain has ruined my life and murdered my mother. I will bring him to justice. If in no other way, I will kill him myself. How can I without opening up this horrible affair that has just been settled? If I undertake to expose him, I shall expose myself. I must have my mother exhumed and see what foul means that demon has used to get her out of the way. How can I do it without giving this letter in evidence, and then I shall be ruined? I cannot. If I bring him to justice, it will not give her life, and she died that I might be saved from his influence. She probably would not have exposed him if he had not shown a disposition to influence me. I can bring about her greatest desire, by avoiding him, but that will not avenge her death. I cannot take anyone into the secret, for that would expose me. I shall be compelled to bide my time, for circumstances are such that I can never get help from anyone. I can never tell my husband. Oh! poor murdered mother! I will avenge your death, but I know you would not desire me to do myself the great injustice that exposing Dr. Fox

will do. I must carry this burden without help."

The door-bell rang. Mrs. Benney hastily bathed her eyes and went downstairs, just as the maid seated Dr. Fox in the parlor. Mrs. Benney stepped into the room, and the doctor rose to meet her and offered his hand. She coldly ignored his hand, and said:

"I am surprised that you presume to call upon me."

"Mrs. Benney, your mother has been dead a month, and not having heard from you, I thought you would take it as a kindness for me to call in a friendly way to see how you are bearing up under your great bereavement. I called at the bank and had a talk with your husband, and when I inquired about you, he kindly invited me to call upon you at my convenience."

"Dr. Fox, you are not human. Your abandon transcends that of the arch-fiend. You have ruined my life by making me unworthy the confidence my husband places in me, evidenced by his inviting you to call. You are dead to all sense of propriety. How can you have the effrontery to insinuate yourself upon him after outraging him as you have? You are a cruel, heartless murderer. How can you murder my mother and then have the audacity to walk into my presence, and extend me your hand, and offer sympathy that you do not feel?"

"Mrs. Benney, I do not understand you."

"You killed my mother; you know you did."

"Mrs. Benney, you do me great injustice. Some enemy

of mine has been talking to you.”

“Yes, my mother has been talking to me. I have just opened a letter she wrote to me the day you killed her, which letter she requested in writing not to be opened for a month. In it she tells me that you killed your wife, and she warned me of you, and said, ‘If I die suddenly, have my body examined.’ She told me of her call upon you, and her reasons for it.”

“Would you be kind enough to show me the letter?”

“No. You can take my word for it or not, as you like.”

“Mrs. Benney, I shall be glad to clear this matter up. Have your mother exhumed, and have medical experts examine her carefully, from head to foot, and I will abide by the results. As you make such a serious charge, I most earnestly urge that the examination be made. As regards the murder of Mrs. Fox, that is an hallucination. I will tell you how it came about: I was much in love with your mother at one time, and I used to play at hypnotism with her. I at one time put her under the spell, and then suggested to her that I loved her, and must marry her; that I had killed my wife, just simply to have the happiness of marrying her. When the effects passed off the suggestion remained, which is not usual in those cases; but it stayed with her, and she never lost it. This fatal joke cured me of ever attempting hypnotism again. I am quite sure that after that, she was never mentally what she



She coldly ignores his hand.—Page 229.



"This little match, with its sulphurous hell on one end."—Page 237.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

was before; hence, I say, I never have attempted to exercise that power since then."

"Well, Doctor Fox, I don't know how much of your story to believe; but I will at least give you the benefit of the doubt until the results of the post-mortem examination are made known."

"Well, you may, for I am telling you nothing but the truth. I have been a victim of her hallucination ever since. I have often wondered what I should do if she took the notion to report this unfortunate impression. Of course, a jury of physicians would acquit me, but people who do not understand it might hold me guilty. Many men are looked upon as criminals, who are not. The crime which they expiate was, from first to last, a thing of imagination—an hallucination."

"Would this indicate that my mother's mind was unsound?"

"On this one question; there is no doubt that the impression had been nursed by her until she was in a condition of monomania."

"Would this lead to any special brain lesion that would account for her death?"

"Not necessarily. The heart derangement that took her off might exaggerate the mind symptoms by interfering with the circulation of blood in the brain. The heart trouble becoming worse, doubtless intensified her monomania, and forced her into renewed activity. When she

called upon me I could see no way out of the affair but to face it, and I told her to do her worst. I made up my mind that I should have to prove her insane on the subject, which I should have had no trouble in doing, with experts; but I assure you I did not crave the notoriety the case would have given me among the people who could not understand the medical phase of the case."

"Well, doctor, your talk is so rational I can see no reason for pushing the inquiry further, and if you will pardon my unwitting accusations, and let the matter drop, I shall be satisfied. I feel that it would be a great injustice to you; besides, an examination could do nothing but unsettle my nerves, and confirm what you have already told me."

"The affair shall be attended to according to your wishes. If you are not fully satisfied I will notify the coroner and have everything satisfactory."

"I am satisfied, doctor."

"I am so glad I came, now; aren't you?"

"Yes, now that you have lifted such a burden off my conscience."

"Don't you think you had better destroy the letter, for fear of it falling into unfriendly hands, to give you trouble as well as myself?"

"Oh! I do not like to give it up. It is the only piece of writing I have of my mother's."

"It is very dangerous, for it incriminates you as well

as myself. You had better dispose of it, and remember only the best of your mother; for this can only remind you of her weakest nature. Besides, you could not show it to anyone to read, for it opens up a history of your life which you want to have forgotten as soon as possible."

"Well, doctor, I can't dispose of it just now. As soon as I have read it over, till I get all the tender points well in my mind, I will dispose of it."

"You had better give it to me to put in my safe, and you can come down and read it as often as you like, and then, when you get through with it, you can destroy it. I am afraid, if you keep it in the house, something will happen to it, then both of us will have trouble."

"Doctor, I cannot go to to your office any more. Our past life must be forgotten, and you must not call upon me again."

"I hope you will not deprive me of your acquaintance in this way. I can't see why we cannot be friends."

"For the present I cannot go to you, and you must not come to me."

"I must know what you do with that letter. I cannot rest with the thought that possibly your husband may get hold of it."

"No danger. Mr. Benney is too honorable to meddle with my affairs."

"You must not take such chances. Give it to me, and I will lock it up, and when you want to read it I will mail

it to you, after which you can return it to me."

"Will you keep it for me?"

"I will. I will lock it up in my safe."

"I will give it to you. You must be sure that you do not destroy it until I say so."

"I promise."

Mrs. Benney went to her room and brought the letter and gave it to him.

"Thank you, my dear Mrs. Benney. I am glad that we understand each other."

The doctor evinced a demonstrative inclination, but she protested and said:

"Doctor, I tell you now that our past intimacy cannot and shall not be renewed. We can, from now on, only be the most casual acquaintance, and our meetings necessitous."

The doctor left Mrs. Benney, feeling happier than he had felt for some time. On the way to his office he congratulated himself upon the clever seizure he had made of the ante-mortem statement, that would either have stretched his neck or given him over to the "pen" for the balance of his life.

"I do owe something to nature, after all. She was unkind in not giving me a father or mother; she brought me into existence without consulting me about where, how, or under what circumstances I should be born; in fact, my wishes and desires were not consulted in the least; but she

did give me wit and genius enough to cope with the world and the things that are in it. I believe that I could cut a man's throat and, before he expired, have him acknowledge that I did not. Luck in many ways has been on my side. There may come a time when fate will abandon me; then, if genius goes back on me, I am gone. The little girl had me in her coils, but I did not fear her as much as others into whose hands this precious letter might have fallen. How came I to go to her at this opportune time, this supreme moment, when she had just finished reading it? Is there not a hand of fate directing me? How could I speak words of conciliation to a daughter whose heart had just been torn by the knowledge of the foul murder of her own mother, and that too by a letter written, ante-mortem, by that mother, if it were not that I am aided and abetted by some superhuman guidance! In all my villainy I have had but little trouble in vindicating myself. Either the majority of people are stupid or I am an agent sent from perdition, commissioned to do the bidding of those in authority there, and under their special protection."

The doctor reached his office and found several persons waiting for him. He mechanically worked through his office hours, receiving and dismissing the patients with but little thought of them, for his mind was filled with the thoughts of his very fortunate seizure of a letter that was the only evidence against him of two crimes, either of which would take his life or freedom, or both.

After he had finished his business he dismissed his office boy, locked the doors, and said to himself:

“I can afford to rest this evening, after the success of to-day. I feel unusually tired; these shocks I have been having of late are terribly wearing upon me. The ease with which I parry these thrusts is not so easy after all. The amount of nerve force expended shows that my success is accomplished only by the concentration of all the energy in my system. Each is a supreme effort. When that girl opened up on me, I should not have been more surprised to have met her mother than I was with the knowledge with which she confronted me. How terribly enervating it is to be brought face to face with incriminating evidence when one thinks all evidence dead!”

The doctor took the letter from his pocket. (Mrs. Benney had sealed it up and put her own name on it.)

“Ah, I have you! The evidence I hold has been the wish of my life for almost twenty years, to kill, to burn, to annihilate. I thought I had you four feet under the sod; but you come bobbing up as serenely as though nothing had happened. Ah, you precious parchment! I cannot trust you out of my sight. Put you in my safe? Oh, no! You are too treacherous; you would become tired of that retreat, and find some excuse to fall in company with the State’s Attorney. I will tear the envelope open and see if you are really in there. Yes, you are.—‘My dear Daughter. I am going down to Dr. Fox’s office to-day.’ Yes, you did

come, didn't you? 'The nature of his crime.' Yes, that is all I want to read of that. I know the nature of it without being told again. Well do I remember how that innocent woman died. Before she was fully under the influence of the anæsthetic, which I was giving her under the pretense of extracting a tooth, she looked into my face smiling, and said: 'Dearest, you will not let me die, will you?' I answered her assuringly, and then she said, 'I would not trust another living person to give it to me.' These were her last words.

"Poor, confiding woman! Life was sweet to her, but death was best, for she has been saved many heartaches. Women will be sentimental, and she was no exception to the rule. Well, I won't read any more of it; I will turn to the name. Yes, there it is—'Mary Bassett.' Very well, Mary; this is all that remains of your mortal remains. Come over here, cuspidor. You are a fitting sepulcher for the remains of the cremated remains of all that is mortal of what was once a being whom I loved, and who desired to requite me by turning me over to the hangman. This little match, with its sulphurous hell on one end, will answer two purposes, viz: it will destroy the last trace of a desire to murder me, and be emblematical of what I give to all sworn enemies. Is there any real difference between me and those people who thirst for so-called legal murder? I do my work without state's expense; lawyers, judges, jurors, witnesses, hangmen, and a morbid public are saved

a feast. My plan is more humane. In fact, it is respectable, for my victims have public sympathy, and die much easier than at the end of a rope.

“Now, when the little girl wants to read that last message from a dying mother,—well, she won’t, and that’s all there is to it. She can’t say anything; her mouth was sealed the night of the masquerade ball, if it never was before. Mrs. Adams has too much at stake to give me trouble, and besides, *she loves me, and she is a woman.* A jealous woman may go too far,—farther than she intends,—and accidentally hang a man, which she came near doing this time, and then forever afterward regret it. I shall have to watch her a little. If she knows her own mind I am safe; but before I permit her to make many more such mistakes I shall have to decide upon a mode of dying for her.

“‘The kindest wish of my friends is euthanasia.’ I am a friend of her’s, then why should I not take this much interest in her for past favors?

“Once more I am safe. ‘Don’t fool yourself.’ What demon is that? Is there some one in that other room? My God! Shall I be forced to kill some one who has been temerarious enough to undertake to steal my thoughts?”

Taking his gun, the doctor stepped out into another room from whence the sound appeared to come.

“I see nothing anywhere.”

“Don’t fool yourself.”

This time the sound came from the room he had just left. Hurrying back, every nook and corner was searched. Every room was carefully examined, but nothing could be found.

“What does that mean? Ah! I know. I have been in such a nervous strain so long, my nerves are giving way. I must have rest or I shall be seeing all kinds of demoniacal hallucinations. A good and timely warning. I shall take a trip and rest up; get away from this world of fancy that is about to take hold of me on account of so much reality. If I do not I shall have a room full of ghosts. A little medical knowledge is not a bad thing.”

The doctor was very nervous during the remainder of the evening, when he left his office, and for several days he felt that his old-time boldness and reckless fearlessness had abandoned him, and left him to cower at the least unusual sound. Every man he met he fancied was a hold-up. There were noises in his ears, and he often fancied sounds like the human voice; all of which phenomena, his medical knowledge explained to him, were the legitimate outcome of overstrained nerves. He began at once to arrange for a vacation, and when everything else was done, ready for his departure, he wrote Mrs. Benney a note telling her what disposition he had made of the only thing that would compromise her in any way. He explained that his health was not very good, and that if anything should happen to him while he was away, his papers would be handled by other people, and along with them her letter, which would be very compromising to her.

NINETEENTH.

MRS. BENNEY EMPLOYS DELECTIVE FOY TO RUN DOWN THE MURDERER OF HER MOTHER. INTRIGUE AMONG THE DETECTIVES. DETECTIVE FOY TEMPORARILY BAFFLED BY HIS FELLOWS.

Mrs. Benney received Dr. Fox's note, and was both surprised and hurt at his unwarranted liberty. The idea that he would do such a thing without consulting her gave her a new phase of the man that she had not suspected. The action was more that of a master, presuming that his own will was the ultimatum from which there could be no appeal; not even a protest could be entered. His action was so percipitate that it appeared as though he had not contemplated that there could be any objection; in fact, by his act he gave her to understand that he did not recognize any wish but his own. She went into hysterical sobbings when she realized that the only evidence she had of her mother's love was gone. After the shock of the note had somewhat passed off, and she had regained something of composure, she began to think.

"Why is Dr. Fox so solicitious of my welfare that he will deliberately, without my consent, destroy a letter of

mine—the only letter I have from my mother? I begin to suspect that his fears of that letter were more selfish than he would have me believe. Does he not prove by his actions that he is preeminently selfish?

“If he read the letter he must know that I have the written statement which that letter refers to? No, he has not read it; for he would have made an effort to secure the statement. Is it possible that I have permitted him to make a fool of me, and that his desire to get that letter into a safe place was more to shield himself than me? I believe it. I see it now. He has lied to me, and I, miserable, shallow-brained, insipid fool, have allowed the murderer of my mother to persuade me into believing her mentally unsound, and to ignore her request. Oh, horrible! that I should have listened to him, when she has shown him up to be such a black villain!

“What shall I do? Let me see. If he has destroyed that letter he has removed all the evidence against me of my shameful indiscretion. If he is really a murderer, no one will believe him if, for revenge, he should be disposed to avenge himself by talking about me. He evidently does not know that I have this statement from my mother.

“The more I think of his desire to get hold of that letter, the more I am convinced of the truths it contained. I shall avenge her death, and shall begin this day. I have already dallied long enough.

“Oh, what a silly woman I am to let his soft words

deter me from duty! I will go to a detective at once, and begin an investigation. If I give this paper to a detective, I am liable to lose it, and then I will not have a scratch of a pen of my mother's. I shall copy it and lock the original up, and give the copy to the detective, so that if that is lost I shall still have the original. These cold-blooded men do not have the appreciation of a mother's writing that I have. Now that the letter is gone, I shall preserve this as long as I live, for it is my own mother's writing."

Mrs. Benney copied the statement in full, and locked up the original. Immediately after lunch she went to the chief of detectives and requested a private interview, either with him or with some one of his force who was reliable. As the chief was engaged, he introduced her to a Mr. Foy, one of the most expert sleuths.

"Mr. Foy, here is a statement left by my mother. She wrote it the day she died. I desire you to read it, and give me your opinion on what can be done."

"I see, Mrs. Benney, this is an old crime, and Dr. Fox is a very prominent man. His prominence makes him a hard man to handle; besides, this may be all the evidence that can be found, and this statement has not been sworn to or attested. It is doubtful if you can do anything with him. Of course, he will deny it, and as no farther evidence will be available, the accusation will fall for lack of proof."

"My mother would not make a false statement."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I do not doubt the truthfulness of this statement. A judge and jury might hold an opinion similar to yours and mine, but law, to be just, must give both sides of a question equal weight. The statement would not be admitted as evidence in a court of law—would not even be permitted to be read. We have a statement written out by your mother, and on the other hand we have, or assume we have, the doctor’s statement to the contrary. If the murder had been committed more recently we should have the additional evidence that a post-mortem would give, for or against the defendant.”

Mrs. Benney then told him of her mother’s death, the letter she wrote, and left for her, what became of the letter, and, as far as she could remember, what was in it.

“Mrs. Benney, you have a good case, and this last affair makes strong evidence against the doctor in the first case.”

Mrs. Benney then explained her interview with the doctor, how he had told her of her mother’s hallucination, which was the result of hypnotism, and that the doctor had succeeded in persuading her that he was innocent. She told him how the doctor urged her to have her mother exhumed, but at the same time had explained everything so clearly that she thought it unnecessary, and in fact, of her own free will, had dismissed the idea.

“Mrs. Benney, you have been victimized by him. Everything is clear to my mind that he has in some mys-

sterious way murdered your mother. Have you any suspicion of Mrs. Adams?"

"In what way, Mr. Foy?"

"That she might be an accomplice."

"Oh, horrors! no. Mrs. Adams is a lady, and I would not believe that she knows anything about it."

"I would advise you to have your mother's remains examined."

"Can an examination be conducted so that, if nothing is found, no report of this suspicion will get out?"

"Yes; we have a physician connected with our force, and we will make a secret examination; if we find no evidence of foul play, we can drop the matter if you like."

"Well, I will give you a check as a retaining fee, and if you succeed in proving Dr. Fox guilty, I will make you a private gift of five thousand dollars."

"Thank you, Mrs. Benney, you may rest assured that not a stone will be left unturned. I will go at once and get our doctor, and we will call upon Mrs. Adams and get her statement."

"You will not make trouble for Mrs. Adams?"

"Not at all. We must see her in order to get some idea as to the manner of death. You may call to-morrow, and we will keep you advised as to our progress. You had better give me the key to your family vault, so that we can get in as soon as we are ready for an examination."

“ You will not mutilate the remains more than necessary? ”

“ We will be as considerate as possible, to accomplish our purpose.”

Mr. Foy and Dr. Pierpont called upon Mrs. Adams to obtain as much information as possible concerning the manner of Mrs. Bassett's death. It was necessary, in keeping down suspicion, and getting as much truth as possible, to lead Mrs. Adams to think they were the adjusting claim agents for the insurance company, in search of evidence of the death of Mrs. Bassett.

“ Mrs. Adams you were with Mrs. Bassett when she died? ”

“ I was.”

“ Did she complain in any way before her death? ”

“ Not at all. She appeared to be as well as anyone up to the moment of her death.”

“ She did not complain of difficult breathing? ”

“ She did not.”

“ Did she put her hand to her heart? ”

“ She did not.”

“ Did she make any kind of a movement? ”

“ No, she was quite animated in discussing a subject with me, threw herself back in her chair, and was gone within a few seconds.”

“ Have you any reason to suspect her of suicide? ”

“ I have not.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Did she take anything while you were with her?”

“No, sir.”

“How long have you known her?”

“Almost twenty years.”

“Did you ever hear her complain of sickness?”

“She has had several sick spells, but the rule was, she never complained, and always appeared healthy.”

“We thank you for your statements, and beg pardon for disturbing you, but this is one of our duties.”

“I am glad if I have been of use to you.”

The detective and the doctor bowed themselves out of the Adams house, and, when well on the street, Dr. Pierpont said:

“Foy, you have no case. The woman must have died from a paralytic stroke. The trouble must have been of the brain, and located in the base—possibly apoplexy, but the description is somewhat ambiguous. We need not examine farther than the base of the brain, and if we do not find the trouble there we may as well drop the search.”

“That is bad news, doctor.”

“You bloodthirsty sleuth-hound! Would you have a man a murderer just simply to satisfy a suspicion?”

“Oh, no! I don’t want to find an innocent man a murderer, but when a fellow is one, I want to trap him.”

“You are still suspicious of Dr. Fox?”

“Why should I not be? Mrs. Bassett’s letter to her daughter was indeed a strange coincidence if there is noth-

ing in it. I shall believe that doctor guilty, whether we ever convict him or not. If I could watch him for a while I would find out. I don't believe a man can commit as foul a murder as that without giving himself away to a man who is an expert in detecting the signs of guilt. Shall we examine her to-night?"

"I think, as long as you will not be satisfied otherwise, we may as well attend to it at once and be through with it."

"I shall not be of any benefit to you in the post-mortem examination, so I will go out of the city to-night on a little unfinished business, and will see you to-morrow. Don't fail to find the cause, for I am sure that woman was murdered in some mysterious way."

The doctor and Mr. Foy parted. The doctor went to headquarters, and Mr. Foy to the depot.

At eleven o'clock Dr. Pierpont was examining the cranial viscera, and in passing his fingers down between the membranes and the skull he felt something like a spiculum, which he soon discovered was a foreign substance. It passed through the occipital bone into the brain. He stopped his examination, dismissed his attendant, and went for the chief, who came with the doctor to the room where the autopsy had been made, and the two held a private consultation, with all the assistants locked out.

"Chief, this is a pretty smooth job. How it was possible is beyond my comprehension. But this hare-lip pin

has been shoved through the skull and into the fourth ventricle. An opening must have been formed in the bone for this pin to be passed through, for it is too soft a metal to have been forced in, and it could not have been driven in without killing her on the spot. She must have been unconscious when the hole was made. On a closer examination I find the soft tissue immediately around the pin-hole charred. Very little substance is destroyed, however. This has been done with a galvanic needle."

"The patient was chloroformed?"

"No, that could not have been, for she would have resisted the drug and known of its administration, and as she was expecting foul play she would have defended herself. I can't see how it could have been done except by hypnotism."

"Could she have been hypnotized under the circumstances?"

"She must have been. The doctor made the hole with his galvanic needle, then forced the pin into the opening, and allowed it to project in the hair, so that if she pushed against it in any way, either lying down or leaning the head back against anything, it would be pressed into one of the most vital spots of the brain."

"This was a strictly professional job, doctor."

"Yes, the most ingenious affair I have ever heard of."

"You know Dr. Fox, of course?"

"Oh! yes; he is one of the leading practitioners of the

city, and quite wealthy. You are acquainted with him, chief?"

"Yes, indeed. He is a special friend of mine—in fact, my physician, and I would not believe this if I did not see it with my own eyes. He is a most splendid man. I would give much if I did not know of this fiendish murder."

"I guess he would give more if you did not."

"No doubt of that. I will guarantee he would give fifty thousand dollars if this could be blotted out."

"Well, if he will give that much, we had better blot it out for him. All we do against him cannot help his victim, and what we would get would be of great benefit to us."

"Yes, but Foy would not compromise with him for all the doctor is worth. He knows nothing but to dog his victims down to justice, whether there is much or little in it."

"We need not tell him."

"How will you keep him from knowing?"

"If you will guarantee me half of fifty thousand dollars, I will fool Foy. I will simply tell him I found no evidence of foul play, and what has he to do but believe me."

"I am sure I can get you that amount if you can cover this affair so deeply that it will never come to light."

"I will do it. Of course you are to simply keep mum. You don't know anything, except that I found nothing."

The next day Mr. Foy reported at headquarters, and

went at once to Dr. Pierpont's office to get the result of the examination.

"Well, doctor, what did you find?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing! Oh, heavens! Could you find nothing?"

"Not anything."

"Did you examine everything?"

"Only the head."

"Why not?"

"Because the manner of her death precluded all suspicion of anything else."

"Well, if she died of brain trouble, why could you not find something?"

"You see, if there is a disease of the nerves, nothing but the microscope will show that, and as we were only desirous of finding whether she died of violence, my examination was sufficiently critical for that."

"And you found nothing?"

"Not a thing."

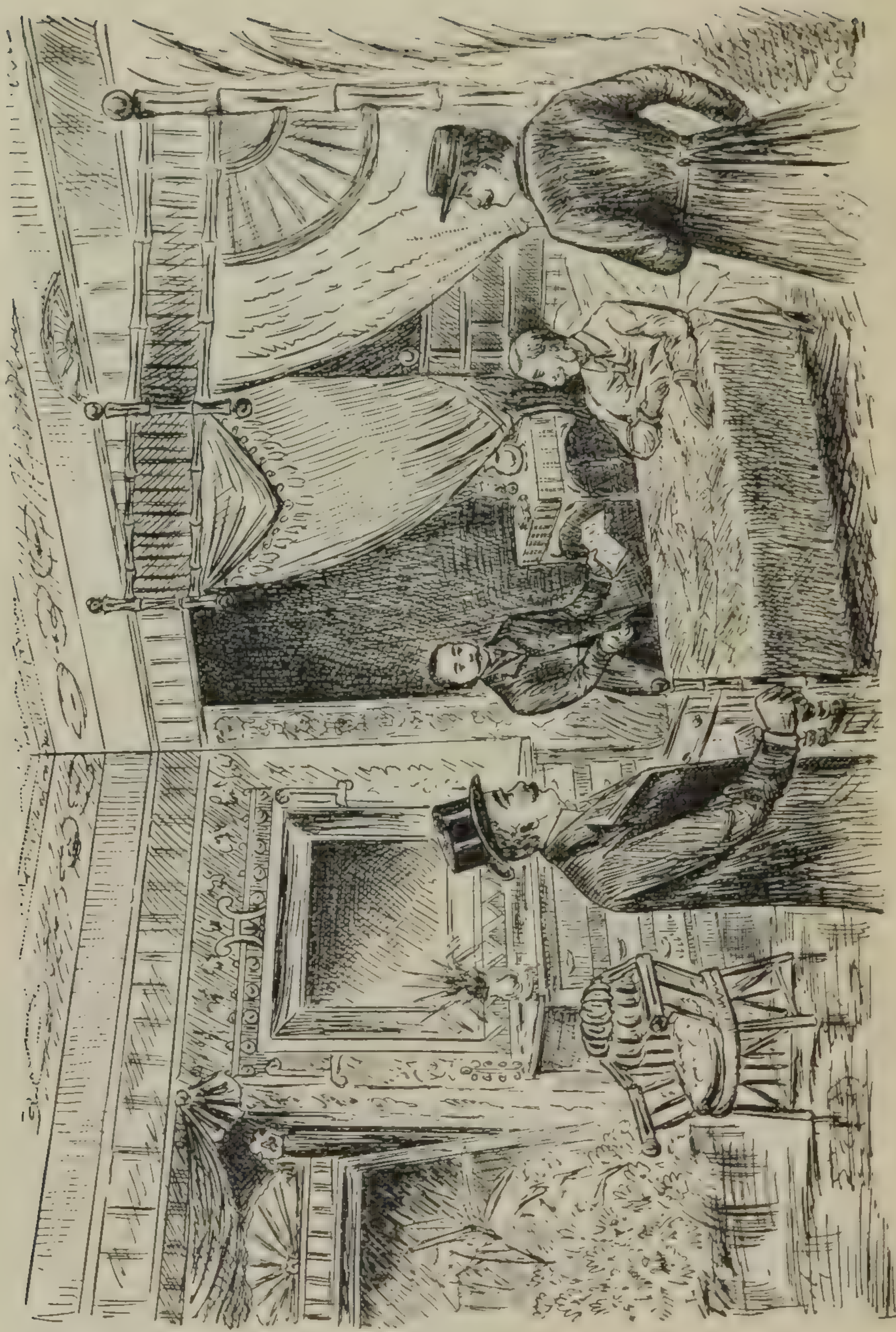
"Your science is a farce. You fellows can kill as many as you please, but when one undertakes to prove it, your diabolical means are so concealed that your crimes are hidden from each other."

"You can't give up the idea that Dr. Fox is guilty?"

"As sure as there is a Dr. Fox, he is a murderer. I could almost hang him on circumstantial evidence. I must see Mrs. Benney and give her the result of our ex-



"My God! shall I be forced to kill some one?"—Page 238.



"I will, with your permission, continue in his hands." — Page 269.

amination. She will be happily disappointed at the report, for she has no desire to be forced to avenge a mother's death. This affair is very disagreeable to her, but she felt that if her mother had been foully dealt with it was her duty to investigate. I am sure she will not find fault with our verdict."

Mr. Foy left Dr. Pierpont's office to go to Mrs. Benney, and called on the chief to see how he felt over the result of the examination.

"Chief, you know the doctor's verdict in the Bassett case?"

"Yes; he found no evidence of murder."

"I am a little disappointed, aren't you?"

"No, not especially; monomaniac women are not scarce."

"I guess that's so."

As Mr. Foy left the chief's office he had a faint doubt in his mind as to the exact honesty of the doctor's report, and could not help saying to himself: "The doctor may have found something, and he may have not. It may be that he is going to protect the villian simply because they both belong to the same profession. The clannishness of men is seen on every hand. He may have an idea that, by throwing me off the track, he can cheat justice and draw from that rich murderer a handsome sum, which he no doubt can do. I shall make him believe I have given up the search, but I will watch him like a hawk. The chief is

too ready to give this case up. It looks to me as though he is too unconcerned. It is not like him to say one day, 'That is a good case,' and the next day, 'there is nothing in it.' I will keep an eye on this affair."

At the end of his reverie he had reached Robert Benney's residence, and found Mrs. Benney anxious to see him.

"What results, Mr. Foy?"

"Nothing found."

"Is it possible there is no clue to this fiendish murder?"

"Not a thing."

"I can't believe that my mother was not murdered, even if you can get no clue by your examination."

"I am of your opinion, Mrs. Benney. I am not satisfied with the results, and shall not cease my search. It may take a long time, but I shall bring that man to justice. Do not worry, and do not expect results too soon, but rest assured that if he is guilty I will bring him to justice. You may not see or hear from me very soon, but when I know something I will come to you."

TWENTIETH.

DR. FOX IN EUROPE. DETECTIVE FOY IN THE EMPLOY OF
DR. FOX AS NURSE. DR. FOX CONFESSES AND IS BROUGHT
BACK HOME.

Dr. Fox had kept his home papers posted as to his various moves. He had been reported at different times in Europe, and each time in a different city. Once he was reported sick in Paris, and was removed from there to Carlsbad, where the waters of those famous springs had renewed and restored him. Once a very unfavorable report was sent home of his condition; it was feared that he would soon become paralyzed. For several months he had been attended by a male nurse. At one time the doctor had received a letter from the chief of detectives of his own city, and following this he was prostrated and confined to his room for more than a week, with an attendant day and night. He would hollow out at times: "Don't fool yourself." After these spells he would have his attendant search the rooms and halls for some one whom he declared was saying these words to him. For one of his nurses he formed a great liking, and he could not be satisfied when he was out of his sight. This young man was an American

and well educated. When the doctor got well enough to dispense with one of his nurses, he dismissed the German and informed the American that as long as he was traveling he desired him to remain with him. One day, after the nurse had been reading to him till he was tired, he said:

“Henry” (Henry Allen was the nurse’s name), “how is it that you are doing this kind of work, when your education would justify you in taking a higher station in life?”

“Well, doctor, I hope sometime to do different. I was prepared by an uncle to enter a law school, but just about that time, he died, and his estate was so miserably handled by the administrator, there was nothing left for me, and I have been drifting from one thing to another, hoping to eventually finish up law. I have some love for travel, and an opportunity presented itself for me to come here to Carlsbad with a sick man, and I came. I was not here long till he died, and I saw your advertisement for an American nurse, and I thought I would come and see you, and if I suited you, perhaps I would get an opportunity for more traveling.”

“If you stay with me, you will, for I am going to do quite a good deal in the next few months, and if you are not with me, it will be your own fault, for I recognize you more as a companion than a nurse, and if you can continue to fill both requirements, I shall need you as long as I am away from home.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Thank you, doctor. As long as I am with you, it will be source of pleasure to know I am appreciated.”

The doctor had Henry read to him quite a good deal; often he would fall asleep, and many times his mind wandered away so that he lost much of the reading; but much of the time he appeared to have the reading done more as an opportunity to lose himself in thought foreign to the subject of the book.

One day he received a paper and a letter from his American home, and he sent Henry out on some business for him as an excuse to read the letter by himself. It was from the chief of detectives, who told him that nothing short of fifty thousand dollars would successfully hide all evidence of the murder of Mrs. Bassett, and that he, the doctor, must make some arrangements to satisfy the demand, or the facts in the case would be given to the public.

The doctor wrote a short letter saying he would satisfy the demand as soon as his health would admit of his giving attention to business details. He also wrote a letter to his business manager, requesting him to dispose of certain properties; in fact, he expressed a desire to have all his real estate disposed of except one very valuable business block. When Henry returned, the doctor gave him the two letters to mail, and also a draft to have cashed.

Henry mailed the letters, not, however, till he had opened the one to the chief and copied its contents. Little did Dr. Fox dream that his much valued nurse was a

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

detective, hounding his every move, word, and letter. Little did Dr. Pierpont and the chief suspect that they were being tricked at their own game, but our splendid nurse was no other than the same detective Foy, who a few weeks before had bidden his client good-bye and told her that she might not see him soon.

Time passed on and Dr. Fox changed Carlsbad for Berlin. They both enjoyed the trip. While they rested here, more letters were received from the chief and Dr. Fox's business agent. The agent had succeeded in disposing of most of the property, and had placed in the bank, subject to the doctor's orders, all money realized from the sale. The chief urged the doctor for a remittance, to show his good faith and to clinch the bargain. The doctor wrote an answer to each. To the chief he inclosed a check for ten thousand dollars, and to the agent a request to reserve no property, but sell all, and put the price on the favorite block quite high. He told his business manager that inasmuch as his health was not improving, he should not return as soon as he had agreed to, and possibly not at all. In the event that his health did not return America would not see him any more.

Henry mailed the letters as before, after taking a copy of them and keeping out the check. A few days after these letters were sent away, and the doctor had recovered from the shock which the chief's letters invariably brought on him, they started for Geneva. The travel in Switzer-

land seemed to brace him up and make him feel better than he had for some time. Henry was not called upon to read to him as much as usual, but to Henry's delight the doctor desired to go out more. They spent much time on Lake Lemman and on the promenades in the old city on the left bank of the river Rhone, which were made on the old fortification grounds.

They spent much time at the art exhibition in the Museum Rath. They visited Rousseau's monument and many other historic places. Several weeks after their arrival in this city, and just when they were about to start for Saint Petersburg, the doctor received another letter from the chief which upset him more than he had been since his sickness at Carlsbad. Henry had become free enough by this time to say to the doctor:

"I think you had better cut off that correspondent; he does you more harm than your traveling does you good."

"Do you think so, Henry?"

"You are always sick for a week afterwards. I have been tempted to suppress those letters, just to save you the shock they give you."

The doctor had been extremely careful to keep all letters out of sight, and his conversation had never held an allusion to his life at home. Henry could not at any time draw him out. One day he ventured to ask the doctor the meaning of his calling out when he was sick: "Don't fool yourself?" The doctor passed it off by saying that

he supposed it must have been an hallucination due to nervousness. At this time the doctor appeared to be more communicative, and exhibited more of depression than usual.

"I have been thinking of late how foolish I am to permit myself to go on living when I can so easily end all with this little hypodermic syringe."

"You should not feel that way, doctor. You have much to live for, if it is only to see the world. You have the money necessary to keep up this life, and if your friends trouble you, cut them off."

"Suppose you can't, then what?"

"The world is wide, and by putting distance between you and them and then cutting off communication you will not be troubled."

"When a man gets to my age, the world is very dull and unattractive except where he is acquainted. If I cannot go home, I may as well die."

"You are despondent, doctor."

"I have much to make me."

"Has not your life been happy?"

"Yes, and no. I have seen much of life, in fact am satiated and tired of living, and there is no place for me to turn for rest. The grave offers nothing, for if I am to be perpetuated, I can expect nothing there but perpetual remorse."

"You believe in a life beyond the grave?"

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I do. If there is nothing after this breath leaves me but annihilation, the whole plan of life is a failure, a stupendous farce, a waste of energy; besides, there is no equity or justice in it. Those who get nothing in this life and nothing in a life to come, why are they cursed with life at all? Those who get all here and live a life that is filled with crime and inhumanity to others, if all they have to do is simply to die to pay the penalty, there is no justice in such a plan of creation.”

“A man that has done the good that you have, and as all able and busy physicians do, surely has not lived in vain, and if there is another life, you will have your reward.”

“You don’t know me. All the good I have done is as a molehill to a mountain when placed by the side of the crimes I have committed.”

“Doctor, you are blue and despondent. You are in a condition of mind that can see only your faults, and you forget the great amount of good you have done in the past.”

“I have a mind to confess to you and then end my troubles. There is no use for me to send for a minister, for he can give me no hope. The hope he would offer would be a mockery. I have forfeited pardon, and my sense of justice would prohibit me from accepting pardon if it could be offered me.”

“I think, doctor, you had better take something for your nerves and go to bed, and see if you can’t sleep off

this horrible nightmare that is haunting you to-day."

"Will you listen to me, and promise not to abandon me, and if I end my troubles, stay with this worthless body till it is placed by the side of the woman I so foully murdered when she loved and trusted me, and whom I was never worthy of, but who of all beings would, were she alive or could she speak from her grave, forgive me? Of all the crimes of my life, that was the most fiendish. Cruel monster that I was, I held her in my arms and spoke words of love and encouragement to her, and at the same time pushed her off into eternity. I say, can I trust you, and will you befoul yourself by keeping my company till I am no longer in need of it?"

"Doctor, I fear your mind is wandering, and you will, unless you sleep, do yourself injustice. I am not prepared to believe you the monster you are painting yourself. Do not say more, but do as I say, sleep, and then your mental atmosphere will clear and you will see yourself in a different light."

"Even you will not listen to me. Have I outlived the sympathy of every living creature?"

"Doctor, I only mean to be kind to you, and you need rest, I am sure."

"Will you listen to me and promise not to abuse my confidence?"

"If you must tell me of your life, I will listen."

"Will you promise not to turn me over to the cruel

officers to be further abused?"

"I fear you will force me to see it my duty if you tell me more, and I can believe you are not crazy."

"I am not crazy. I am as sane as you are, but what little time I have to live, I would like it in peace from officers. Will you promise?"

"Doctor, do not force me to agree to do wrong. If your life has been such that to tell it would bring about your arrest, don't tell it to me, for I should feel it my duty to report you, and I should not like to have you think me unkind. A man becomes an accessory to crime when he wilfully suppresses his knowledge of it. If you are liable to arrest, don't tell me, and my conscience will be clear to go on and do for you as I have; besides, if you confide in me, and your love for life comes back, you may then recognize me as your enemy and desire to get rid of me. It is better for us, now that we are friends, to remain such. You need me for the present, at least, and if you have confidence in me you will feel safe in my company, but if I know disagreeable things about you—criminal knowledge—you will soon desire to be out of my presence. For my good and for yours, do not speak farther upon this subject."

"I must unburden myself. I must have a confidant. My unsettled business must be put in shape so that if this horror of life continues I can rid myself of myself."

"If you must tell the story of your life, why not go to your home, where you committed the crime, and tell it to

the authorities and let them do as they will with you? To tell it to me will bring you no relief."

"I have wealth that I must dispose of, and you have treated me so kindly I feel that it will be a pleasure to help you. If you know my life and will avoid the mistakes I have made, possibly by helping to make you the man I should have been will ameliorate to a limited extent my miserable failure."

"My ambition is for something far beyond my present reach or reasonable expectation, and any course I could take to honorably hasten the coming of my wishes appears to me desirable. But I sometimes have thought that sudden leaps are dangerous; for a man gets over a period of life by artificial help, that contains experiences which he needs for the discipline therein contained. I may be foolish, but I have thought that a man's life should be like a solid block of masonry, carefully constructed from the foundation to the top, throughout; every inch of the wall should have especial care. In life, sudden leaps leave weak spots which will be the cause of premature decay."

"Henry, what you have said contains more philosophy than can be found in most men. If your ideas were taught—thoroughly inculcated in young men—thousands of blasted lives and fortunes would be saved. Ambition to go fast—a desire to run when I should have walked—has caused much of my life-failure. If you will accept help I will put you where you can use your pleasure as to how

you will finish up your education."

"Thank you, doctor, for this expression of kindness. We will not talk any more about that now. What do you think of my proposition about your going home and making what statement you have to make to the authorities?"

"I can't, I won't think of it. I should be prosecuted, and I could not face my old friends. If you will not permit me to tell you of my life, I will not tell anyone"

"You may tell me if it will give you any satisfaction, provided you will not bind me by promises I do not care to make."

"I know no one whom I would trust as I do you, for you are not mercenary, and a friend that can't be bought is a freak of nature."

The doctor told Henry of his crimes as already known to the reader; nothing was left out; the minutest details were given, and he finished up by throwing himself wholly on the mercy of the young man.

"As you have told me so much, will you not tell me of this man who has been writing the letters that caused you so much trouble?"

"That man is the chief of detectives at my home, and he is wanting me to pay him fifty thousand dollars to blot out all traces of my last crime. I have promised to pay him, and sometime ago I sent him a check for ten thousand dollars, which he claims he did not get, yet I am sure he did."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“If he has promised immunity, why need you fear going back?”

“I am afraid to trust him; he is an old friend, but if he is corrupt enough to hold me up for that amount, after he gets it he may turn me over to the authorities.”

“Can’t you make arrangements to tie him up so he can’t go back on his promise?”

“If I was myself I could, but I am so broken down I don’t know how to protect myself.”

“Turn this business over to me and I will fasten him so tight he can’t get out.”

“I will leave it to you, Henry; do as you think best.”

“If you leave it to me we will start for your home at once and get the affair settled up. Then if you care to resume your travels you can do so with some hope of benefit. As it is, you are getting no good from all this unrestful rest. Will you go?”

“I will simply put myself into your hands and you may do for me and with me as you please. Before we start I desire to see a lawyer and have my will made.”

A lawyer was brought in and the doctor bequeathed half his wealth to Henry Allen (nurse), and half for the founding of a school to teach young men and women how to avoid mistakes in life; where life as it is lived will be taught, the same to be under the management of Henry Allen.

Henry wrote (for the doctor) to the chief, telling him

to make out all papers necessary to insure the doctor's immunity from his crimes and have them ready, as he would be home the first of the coming month.

When the doctor arrived home, Henry had him taken at once to his rooms, and then dropped a note to the chief of detectives to call the following day at eleven o'clock and bring the papers. At the hour specified the chief and Dr. Pierpont called and found the doctor in bed. Henry had stepped out into an adjoining room.

"Dr. Fox, we are glad to see you back; hope you have had a pleasant visit?"

"I am sure, chief, you were not very desirous that I should have a good time, when you were writing me letters every little while which kept me from feeling well, if I otherwise could."

"Well, doctor, we had this case on our hands, and we were desirous of having it settled, which you could have done by sending a check."

"You have my release papers signed, have you?"

"Yes, here they are. Read them over and see if they suit you. Dr. Pierpont and I have been doing all we could to keep this matter hushed up. We had a very close call at one time to keep it out of the hands of detective Foy, who, if he had gotten hold of the facts, your million would not have bought him off."

"I should like to see a detective you could not buy with money."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

At this remark Henry came in and took the papers out the doctor's hands, and said:

"I am the man these villains allude to. I am detective Foy and not Henry Allen, as you have known me."

Turning to the chief and Dr. Pierpont, he said:

"I have a copy of every letter you have written to this sick man, and am informed of your whole scheme. I shall have you arrested for conspiracy."

"And we will have you arrested for robbing the United States mails."

"I wish you would. I am ready to answer the charge. I did rob one of your letters of a ten-thousand dollar check, and take pleasure in intercepting the balance of that fifty thousand dollars, which is the price of your honor and manhood."

"Dr. Pierpont and I are old friends of Dr. Fox, and we were running a practical joke on him. The whole thing is a farce. There were no evidences of murder, and we are willing to swear that Dr. Fox is innocent. You have no right to have him here under surveillance."

"If Dr. Fox is innocent he is as safe under my protection as yours, and as I am acting in the capacity of nurse I shall continue to administer to him as he sees fit and until he dismisses me. In that capacity I now request you both to leave him, so that he can have the rest he is so much in need of."

"We will take that paper you have in your hand."

“ I will keep this to remind the doctor of the joke you were running on him.”

The chief reached out his hand for it, but the detective drew back and picked up a revolver that was lying on a bracket.

“ I will keep this paper and all the other evidence I hold against you.”

Dr. Fox had been very quiet, seeming to be contemplating the situation, but when the conversation became threatening he said:

“ Gentlemen, you are all friends of mine, and I hope you will treat me as become friends. Don't get excited; there is no need of anger. Henry, or rather Mr. Foy, has been very kind to me, and has treated me with much consideration when we come to realize that he is employed by my opposition to run me down. In reviewing the past few months, filled as they have been with his many kindnesses, I must say that I have fared well in the hands of my enemy, and if all of my enemies are to be measured by his standard I have no choice between camps. I will, with your permission, continue in his hands.”

At this remark the chief and Dr. Pierpont passed out without saying a word, feeling checkmated at every move.

Mr. Foy sat down by the doctor and said:

“ You can see now why I did not want you to confess to me.”

“ I have nothing to regret. You have been a gentle-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

man in your treatment of me, and while I dislike the publicity that will come from this case, I have no great love for life, and will in all probability cheat the authorities out of an opportunity to prosecute me. I should like you to delay my arrest or arrangement as long as you can—at least, until I get well over my exhaustion from our trip home. I desire to have my attorney, Judge Brown, sent for. I feel that his advice will be worth something to me.”

“Inasmuch as you desire me to stay with you, I will give you the time you ask for. I will send for Judge Brown.”

TWENTY-FIRST.

JUDGE BROWN UNDERTAKES TO QUASH ALL EVIDENCE AGAINST DR. FOX BY INTIMIDATING THE DETECTIVES AND COERCING MRS. BENNEY INTO SILENCE. MRS. BENNEY'S DEFIANT STAND: HER CONFESSION TO ROBERT. DR. FOX'S TRAGIC SUICIDE.

Judge Brown called upon the doctor, and the nurse was excused for a while, to give the two men time to talk over the case.

"Doctor, I am very sorry to see you in this condition. Why did you not let me know of your trouble before?"

"This was sprung upon me during my absence, and I did not care to write; besides, I was not in a physical condition to do so most of the time I was away."

"Those detectives can be disposed of with a little money; they are in disgrace, and it will not take much to send them out of the country. With your prosecution they must of necessity be implicated as conspirators, and that of itself will be sufficient to make them desire to hush the matter up."

"The detective who has been on my track will not be so easily disposed of. He is very conscientious, and you cannot buy him off."

"The woman can be brought over to our side, and she

can say whether or not she will push the case further. The record of Mrs. Benney can be used as a persuader to induce her to abandon the idea of prosecuting you. I will call upon her and see what I can do. If she can be brought over to our side, we will then see what we can do with Foy. Inasmuch as you say he thinks you are insane at times, you can play the insane dodge till he will have no conscientious scruples about helping you."

"Judge, you are better than a doctor. You have already lifted most of my sickness from me."

"Don't worry. We will not permit this case to come to trial, but have it all cleared up, and you will be in business again with all your old energy. I will go now to see the chief, and settle him."

Judge Brown called at the detectives' headquarters, and had a talk with the chief.

"Chief, what are we to do with Foy? He has the drop on you, Dr. Pierpont, and Dr. Fox, and as he is a determined sort of fellow, it looks now as though he intended to push the case against all of you. As Dr. Fox's attorney, I want to hush the matter up. I am interested in keeping Foy from having you arrested for conspiracy, on account of the reflection your case will have on my client's case. In fact, the two cases are so inseparably blended, they cannot be successfully tried apart. If you and Dr. Pierpont will quit the country we will make you a present of a thousand dollars each. If you accept, you must go at once,

for probably when Foy talks to his client, arrests will follow at once. Will you go?"

"We will give you an answer at ten o'clock to-morrow."

"I don't think it is safe to wait until to-morrow."

"We will answer you at five this evening."

"I will call for your answer."

Judge Brown then called upon Mrs. Benney.

"Mrs. Benney, I have called upon you in the interest of Dr. Fox. I desire to see if we cannot arrange with you to settle this trouble without publicity. Dr. Fox is a very prominent and popular man, and much of public opinion and sympathy will be with him. Besides, I am informed that if this case comes to trial a little personal history of yours will necessarily come out, which will be better kept back—in fact, would cause you much domestic trouble, besides reflecting very seriously upon you socially."

"Judge Brown, I am at the mercy of a 'bloody, bawdy villain.' Because of an indiscretion committed under circumstances that appear like an evil dream—in a state of mental aberration—evil influence or demoniacal possession—I shall of necessity be compelled to relinquish my desire to avenge my mother's most foul murder."

"Mrs. Benney, I am very sorry for you, but I must do the best I can for my friend and client."

"Your friend and client is a demon. He helps to swell an army that lives a lie before the young and immature,

causing them to put a false estimate upon life. The polish is taken for character, and it is imitated by the inexperienced until they are drawn down into the vortex of ruin and disgrace, where reform is cut off. Disgrace is waiting for me on every hand, and to escape it I must prove myself disloyal to every true friend on earth. From one act of disloyalty to another; from one lie to another; from one villainy to another; each act is a descent carrying me lower and lower.

“What is an innocent girl to do? She is taught by society, by all social requirements, that certain things are expected of her. When she undertakes to carry out these natural requirements (made natural by common consent), she cannot know the dangers until she has compromised herself in a way that leaves but two roads open to her, disgrace on one hand, or an attempt to hide the disgrace by placing her honor and virtue in the hands of the unscrupulous, to be dragged through the filth of corruption, down, down to the depths of hell. Your request in this matter is on the order of coercion. I understand it. If I do not consent to let this foul criminal go unpunished I am to be exposed.

“I see nothing before me but disgrace and ruin. If I comply with this demand, I have bought temporary immunity from exposure, and pay for it with my honor, my duty to a dead mother, and what is left of my womanhood. I place myself in a position to be insulted by villains such as Dr. Fox and possibly Judge Brown,

without the power of resenting it. No, Dr. Fox may expose me all he can, you may expose me all you like, the world may kick me down and trample upon me, but from this hour I intend to do my duty. I will prosecute him to the extent of the law. I know as well as you that an indiscretion on the part of a woman is never forgiven. The reason is, her reform is doubted, for the fiends who drag her down never reform; they measure the world by themselves, and the world accepts them as the standard of measurement."

"I hope, Mrs. Benney, you will think better of your resolution, and let the matter drop. You hold too important a position in society to wilfully ground it, when by saying the word you will save yourself great trouble and disgrace."

"My mind is made up. I prefer facing the disgrace of ignorant crime to putting myself in a position where I must commit it wilfully, knowingly, and without end."

"And your ultimatum?"

"Is that I prefer present disgrace, with a consciousness that I have resolved to do my duty, rather than to hide my disgrace by multiplying crime."

"We shall be able to prove that there was no crime, that your mother was not murdered, that it was a conspiracy on the part of the detectives and yourself to extort money from the doctor."

At this remark detective Foy stepped out from an

adjoining room, and said:

“Judge Brown, you are transcending the bounds of an opposing counsel. I am employed by this woman, and while I am not a lawyer, I don’t propose that you farther attempt to inveigle statements out of her bearing upon this case to strengthen your defense. You have her ultimatum; that is enough for you. If you desire to question her further, you must wait until she is in the presence of her attorney.”

“Will an insignificant whelp like you pretend to question my legal rights or insinuate that I would take advantage of a lady?”

“I know that lawyers will not hesitate to take advantage of anyone to further a client’s interest.”

“That may or may not be true, but it will not apply to me.”

“From that part of the conversation I was forced to hear, by being in the next room, I think you will keep up with the average lawyer in bulldozing anyone. I am sure this attempt of yours is strictly blackmail, simply to get evidence to help your side.”

“Because you are a sneak, who will not hesitate to take advantage of a benefactor, don’t class me with that sort of people.”

“Judge, you are dealing with personalities unbecoming you in the presence of a lady. You forget where you are.”

“If it were not for the lady, and where I am, I would

give you a lesson in civility."

"Judge Brown," interposed Mrs. Benney, "here is your hat, and there is the door. When a man forgets to be a gentleman in my house, I become a party to the breach when I permit him to continue to insult a gentleman who, on account of his gallantry, suffers it to pass without resentment."

The judge took his hat and bowing quite low to Mrs. Benney, said:

"I beg pardon, Mrs. Benney. Your apology for his cowardice is unique, to say the least."

Mrs. Benney made no answer to this remark, but waved him out with her hand, and closed the door behind him.

"Mrs. Benney, I beg your pardon for stepping out as I did, but as your adviser, in lieu of an attorney, I could not let him take any more advantage of you. In shutting him off as I did I incurred his displeasure, and as he is high-strung, his temper got the better of him."

"You did right, and I think you displayed remarkable courage to acquit yourself as you did."

"And I think you displayed remarkable courage in taking the position you did, when the judge threatened to blackmail you if you did not comply with his wish."

"Yes, Mr. Foy, there is a dark spot in my life which I presume will be a stalking ghost that will be ready at all times to walk out before me to intimidate me when duty demands action."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Do not change from the position you have taken, for this is evidence they cannot use against you. Of course they can insinuate and browbeat by threatening to drag this old skeleton into court, but your attorney will object, and no judge will permit such evidence to go to a jury. A good deal of unpleasant notoriety is liable to come from a trial, but to cover, or attempt to cover it, by evading it in any way, only enlarges the complication and makes bad matters worse. There is no mistake about the evidence against Dr. Fox. I have his confession and the chief's letters, but we must not forget that we have no proof beyond what he has said to me, which possibly, and in all probability, will be offset by his denial. Their letters to him may be shown as a conspiracy to defraud him out of money, and then he may refuse to prosecute them, and by not doing so, secure them as witnesses to prove that no evidence of murder was found. It is hard to trap rich villains. I must get a respectable physician or two to examine your mother's remains again, and see what evidence they can find. You must employ an attorney to advise us, for we shall not have an easy task. To-day a young detective returned from San Francisco in whom I have confidence, and I will get him to help me on with this case. Is there a physician in the city whom you could recommend?”

“Yes, I wish you to see Dr. Headly, and if he will serve, he is honest and competent.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“I will go to him at once, and will report to you to-morrow.”

* * * * *

Robert Benney came home just as the detective left.

“Dearest, who was that gentleman?”

“That was detective Foy. He has just returned from Europe with Dr. Fox, whose trail he has been on ever since the doctor left.”

“How is that? Why is there a detective on his track?”

“Read this, and you can probably guess the rest.”

“He murdered his wife! The villain! Why is it that this affair has not been looked into before?”

“My mother held the secret over him until her death, and the doctor murdered her to keep her from telling it.”

“Your mother? He murdered your mother?”

“Yes.”

“How do you know?”

“That question, for me to answer, opens a secret chapter of my life which you do not know. I had rather die than tell you, but it must come, and with it all the condemnation that I deserve. Robert, I have been cruelly false to you. I am not worthy of your kindness and love, and when you know all, you will hate me, and turn away from me, though I cannot blame anyone but myself.”

“What do you mean? Are you acting? When did become stage-struck?”

“Seriously, believe all I say, Robert, for I have lived

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

a lie until I hate myself. My mother left a letter, as you remember, that was to be opened thirty days after her death. That letter explained why she had kept the secret, and that she would never have divulged it but to save me. The letter I opened and read one month after her death. Just as I had finished it, Dr. Fox called—invited, he said, by you. I told him of it, and he succeeded in making me believe that my mother was the victim of a delusion, and I gave the letter to him to keep in his safe, so that no one would see it, as he thought it best, for it compromised me as well as himself. Just before he left he wrote me a note stating that he had destroyed it. I did not show it to you, because I could not bear to be exposed to you, but affairs have taken such a course that I find I must be exposed or let my mother's murder go unavenged; and before you learn of it in some other way, I thought it best to tell you."

"Have you gone crazy? I do not understand you."

Mrs. Benney then fully explained everything.

"Robert, dear husband, how can I tell you of my shame? Your goodness of heart cannot conceive of the depths of depravity to which I have fallen. I myself, when I look back and think of my innocence, my pure intentions, our happy life before our marriage, with all of its bright, sunny promise, our first married life, with its complete satisfaction, only to be compared to an elysium in which our souls drank in complete satisfaction, and then to think of the now! Oh! horrible! it can't be anything else—it

must be an evil dream. Oh, Robert! it can't be true. I must be under the influence of some pernicious drug. It can't be that what I see is real. Oh, heaven forbid!"

She went into hysterical sobbings, and Robert took her in his arms and said:

"My dear wife, do not go on this way. You must be mad. I cannot believe you sane. Don't say any more. You perhaps have gone in opposition to my wishes in securing immunity from domestic responsibilities, but to me you are pure. I cannot believe you have gone wrong in any other way."

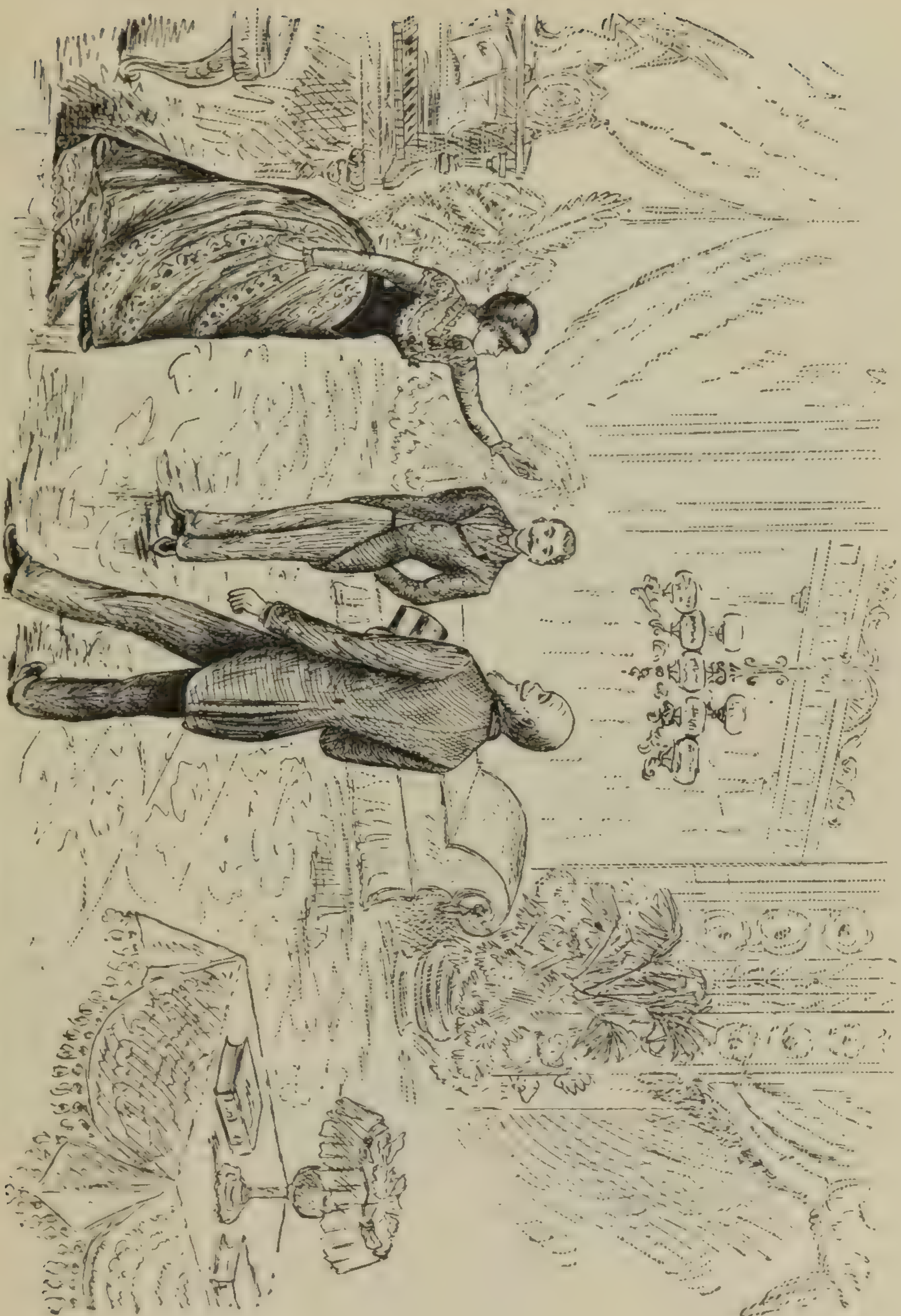
"Do let me go on. Take your arms from around me. If you knew my vileness, you would not contaminate yourself by touching me. I must tell you all. I have resolved to do penance, and it will not be complete till I tell you all. Oh! how can I? Please, Robert, kill me. Do anything with me, but save me from the consuming humiliation of laying my life bare before you."

Again she was checked by sobs, and again her husband tried to console her by petting, rubbing her face, and caressing her.

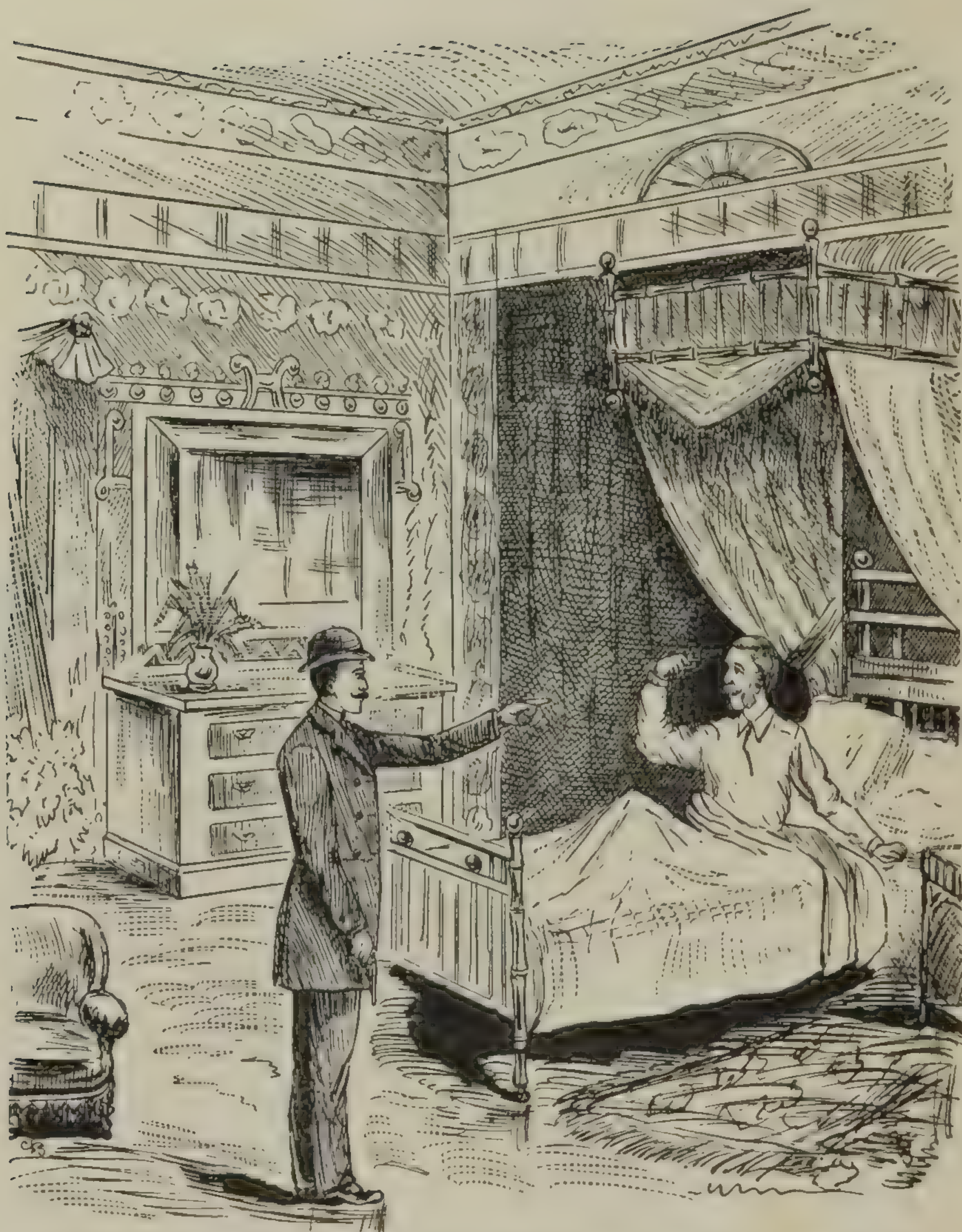
"Robert, do not hold me in this way; permit me to hide my face from you, while I finish my confession. I cannot meet your eyes.

"In my young girlhood and on till we were married, I was given to understand that when people got married it was quite a vulgar thing to have children; that none but

the common and low permitted such a thing to happen. I was educated to believe that prevention was necessary, and that, if unsuccessful, a resort to foeticide was legitimate and customary. I imbibed the belief that all opposition to such a procedure came only from the common rabble of humanity, who were more envious than otherwise. My own mother encouraged me in these ideas, and of course the natural thing for me to do would be to follow opinions such as my mother and all my friends held. The first words I ever heard in opposition to these ideas were from Dr. Headly, and I put him down at once as a crank. I thought you opposed me on account of his advise, and with my then understanding I believed you unreasonable. After talking to various friends, all of whom advised me to help myself, if you would not help me, I made up my mind to take their advice. Before doing so, however, I made another effort to secure your co-operation, but failed. I then had nothing left for me to do but to seek help from some one, without your knowledge. I called upon a prominent physician of this city (I will use no names, for it will not extenuate my crime to implicate others), who readily and willingly helped me out. If all had ended with his professional services I should not now be making this humiliating confession to you; but I had no sooner secured his services than I found myself held under obligations to him. In going to him as I did I could not be independent to resist his approaches. He appeared to realize my situ-



"Judge Brown, here is your hat, and there is the door."—Page 275.



Robert raised his left hand, which was empty.—Page 287.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

ation, and was not slow to take advantage of me. My life suddenly became a continuous falsehood. I was forced to live, talk, and act a lie. Insults came to me, and as I had forfeited your protection,—or placed myself where I could not ask it,—they passed unresented. Advantage was taken of me, and I was intimidated into complication after complication. I found myself face to face with those who were versed in crime. I found that all who had advised and encouraged me in taking this step were living double lives. In fact, I soon found that the whole world, so far as I knew of it was living a lie. The more I endeavored to hide my shame, the deeper I sank, till at last, with a reckless abandon, I plunged deeper, hoping to drown conscience. The result is your ruin, my ruin, and the murder of my mother; and heaven only knows where it will end.

“I do not expect your forgiveness, and do not ask it. I have ruined my own life, but that is the least, for I should suffer; but it is very hard to know that you must suffer equally with myself, and in no way have you earned it. How I wish I could tell my experience to the innocent, who hold opinions similar to those I held, and who no doubt will go blindly on, and fall unwittingly into the same horrible vortex of crime, before they know their danger. Perhaps they will look upon my warning the same as I did upon Dr. Headly’s advice. How hard it is for people to believe in opposition to their wishes! When one starts out on this kind of life, there appears to be a

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

spontaneous generation in the system, of a product that has an anæsthetising influence upon conscience and reason, and before reflection comes (if it ever does), they awake, to find themselves drifting out into a sea, with every hope of rescue cut off. To me, my life of sin leaves an impression such as I imagine would be left after taking some pernicious drug, which would cut off reason or mind coordination, and permit one to live for a time in a land of horrible dreams, but differing from the drug action to the appalling extent of, when awakening, finding the dream a reality. Robert, I can't tell you why I did all this, so do not ask me; I know I have been under some peculiar influence, either auto-generated or coming from without. But, however or wherever it came from, when the spell took hold of me my will became the slave of others. Notwithstanding, at no time was I free of a desire to get away from my entanglements. This, Robert, is all I can say. I must leave your imagination to fill in the disgusting details, which I know your generosity and charity will fail to do as I would, if compelled to say the truth."

"I will help you out of your trouble. I think I can suggest a short road for the detective, and it will save much trouble and disgrace."

"Robert, aren't you mad? You are not going to help me! Don't you hate me?"

"My darling wife," putting his arms around her and kissing her, "you are worse sinned against than sinning."

I cannot be your judge. Dr. Headly has told me so much about the curse of inheritance that I have more charity than I once had. I forgive you, for I believe you have tried to get away from your persecutors; and you have not multiplied sin by attempting to conceal it, but have at last faced shame to overcome evil and do the right. I have more faith in you than ever. I love you, and you must not condemn yourself any further. Keep your face in the direction you have it turned, and you will always be safe. I will go and find the detective, and will give him some advice."

Robert went to Dr. Fox's office, and had difficulty in gaining entrance to his room, but by force he pushed by the nurse and found the doctor in bed.

"Doctor Fox, I have come to settle with you for your foul treatment of my wife. Here, defend yourself," handing him one of a brace of pistols.

"Mr. Benney, you would not take advantage of me. Permit me to get up, so that I shall have an equal chance with yourself."

"I will not take advantage of you. Get up and defend yourself!"

Dr. Fox tossed the revolver that Robert gave him a little distance from him on the bed, and rose to a sitting posture.

"I gave you that to defend yourself with."

"I have no need of it just now. I have a word to say

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

before I use that, with your permission."

"Speak on."

"I am a man of many sins. I have taken pleasure in crime, and have looked upon the commission of it as a special prerogative vouchsafed to me by a damned inheritance. I have felt that I have been specially commissioned, by a power beyond my comprehension, to avenge myself of a cruel prenatal curse. The laws of society began to operate in opposition to me at the moment of my conception, and daily increased until my progenitors were turned against me; all the influences to which my organization were subjected were those of hate and murder, for my mother did everything she could to cut me off before my time, and after my birth my murder was deliberately planned. The maternal influences upon me while I was going through the gestation period were exactly the opposite to what they should have been. I was impressed with hate, not love; sorrow, not happiness; shame, not pride; disappointment, not realization. My mother suffered in mind as only a proud, beautiful, high-spirited, virtuous woman could, at her cruel abandonment by one whom she loved better than life, and who left her to face her shame, disgrace, and disappointment alone. The impression of all this affliction was stamped upon me as an inheritance, and I have had nothing in common with humanity except as I have practiced deceit, the better thereby to avenge myself on humanity, which I have looked upon as my enemy. I have left

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

no stone unturned to gain knowledge to take advantage of my enemy, mankind. Your wife was a victim to my influence, and she is no more to blame than hundreds of others who have been my victims. It is true that the custom of foeticide lowers the moral tone of women, but Mrs. Benney is a woman of much stronger character than many I have met with, and was one of the hardest to influence within my acquaintance. I have practiced hypnotism, not in the crude, coarse manner you see and hear of its being used, for that effect is too vulgar. A man must be a greater fiend than I have been to resort to throwing his victims into a senseless hypnotic state. I prided myself upon bringing my subjects under my control, while leaving them in apparently full possession of their faculties. This is done, and can be done. It is a condition in which their will becomes subject to mine. Their volition is entirely under my dictation, but the victims imagine they are normal, and acting from self-promptings. This is the hypnotism that is being used to make criminals, and our courts of justice hang and incarcerate the tools, but the criminals go free. Many good women are sent adrift by husbands, on account of their being under the influence of some hypnotic arch-fiend. Men are subject to this influence from women. Men and women are condemned alike; their actions are looked upon as moral abandon, and society ostracises them, after which they drift with the current down, down to destruction. Mr. Benney, ponder

well what I have said to you, and let your actions toward your wife be in keeping with the knowledge I have imparted to you."

"My charity is sufficient for her. I have forgiven her, and shall not mistreat her because of you."

"I am through with what I had to say to you; now what will you have me do?"

"Take up that revolver and defend yourself."

"You do not want me to kill you?"

"It matters not to me."

"I do not want to add your murder to my long list of crimes. My mind is satisfied with its revenge against mankind."

"I insist that you defend yourself. I told you that I would not take advantage of you, and I do not care to spend any more time in talk."

"You wish me to use that weapon on you?"

"I do."

Dr. Fox took the revolver in his hand and looked Robert in the eye.

"You cannot use your right hand, and I do not wish to take advantage of you."

Robert made an ineffectual effort to raise his arm, but failed.

"Why do you not kill me if you want to?"

Robert only looked at him abstractedly.

"Your revolver is in your left hand. If you are ready,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

I will count, and when I say three, we are both to fire simultaneously."

Robert raised his left hand, which was empty, the revolver being in his right, and pointed his index finger at the doctor. The doctor put his weapon against his own temple, and said:

"One, two, three!"

There was a loud report, and a bullet crashed through the doctor's brain. He had committed suicide!

Robert had gone through the motion of pulling a trigger and appeared satisfied with his work. He imagined that by his own hand he had avenged a great wrong. He walked up to the bed, looked at the prostrate form, and said:

"You have ruined my life, and I have taken yours. What will my people say when they know that I am a murderer?"

The nurse, who had witnessed the entire transaction, rushed forward and asked him if he would be kind enough to notify the authorities of Dr. Fox's suicide, as he would have to stay with the body until they came and took possession of it.

"Suicide! What do you mean? I killed him!"

"You did not. Dr. Fox shot himself."

"You saw me shoot him."

"Yes, I saw you shoot him with your left forefinger. Your revolver was in your right hand, and Dr. Fox hypnotized you so that you could not lift that hand. Show me

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

your weapon. There! You can see for yourself that all the chambers are loaded. Here is the weapon the doctor used, and there is but one shot fired from it."

Robert looked bewildered for a few moments and then said:

"He really had me hypnotized. What a phenomenon that man was! I came to kill him, and he could have killed me with a toothpick before I could have injured him. Now that my mental fog has passed off I am glad that the affair has ended as well for me as it has. He surely had become dissatisfied with life, and wanted to go, for his actions were cool and deliberate. If he had not chosen to end himself in this way, his natural defenses would have protected him against great odds. I never have believed that I could be hypnotized, but there is no getting away from this fact. What he said of hypnotism I did not believe, and would not now if it had not been demonstrated to me in this positive influence over myself."

Robert promptly notified the authorities, and then went to his wife.

"Dearest, I went up to kill Dr. Fox, but he saved me the trouble by killing himself;" and he related the tragic circumstances.

"Oh, Robert! would you have done such a thing? I am so glad you were spared the crime. It would have been a terrible thing for you to murder him. There would have been no end to your trouble, all on account of my sin."

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Dearest, I should not have been in much trouble. I was troubled at the idea of the pain I should have given you and my dear parents, but, as for myself, it would have been over very soon, for I intended to kill him, and then kill myself. This was the only solution I could see for the complication, but I am thankful I have been saved the double crime, and spared to love and encourage you in living the life you have resolved to live.”

“Robert, you are so noble, so generous, so kind, and charitable. I could not blame you for abandoning me, cursing me, or even killing me.”

“Dearest, I see life differently. I have been uncharitable, and no doubt once would have done just as you have indicated; but my teacher has said to me: ‘Be thankful for your good inheritance, but do not censure those less fortunate, for, remember, there is a good and sufficient reason for their conduct; be sorry for them.’ If I am to follow such advice, shall I draw the line at you, my wife, my loved one?”

“Robert, I am unworthy of you, but if I never loved you before, why should I not now? How could I help admiring and loving you? My life from now is yours—for you, and you alone. How can I help but love Dr. Headly? Is not my life due to him? Is not what happiness I shall have during the balance of my life due to his generous teaching of you? I owe everything to you and to him.”

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“If I had needed any farther demonstration to prove your innocence, I should have had it at Dr. Fox,s office, for he explained to me his peculiar and powerful influence over people, and demonstrated it on me by hypnotizing me, and then making a fool of me, by having me shoot at him with my left forefinger, while I held my weapon in my right hand, without the power to raise it.”

Robert then told her all that happened at the office.

“He could have killed you!”

“All he had to do was simply to do it. He had me under his control.”

“I am so thankful that he is dead, for he appeared to change my mind at his will whenever he was in my presence.”

“I guess, my dear, we are both better off now that he is out of the way; for he was a dangerous man, and fully understood himself and his power. The possession of such a power, by such a man, is a menace to society.”

TWENTY-SECOND.

JUDGE BROWN MURDERED BY DETECTIVE FOY. DETECTIVE
FOY MOBBED.

Detective Foy called to see Dr. Headly, but found him out of the city, and as he was smarting with indignation at Judge Brown's insult, he went direct to the judge's office, determined to have satisfaction.

The judge turned from his writing on hearing some one enter, and when he saw that it was the detective, he said:

“You cowardly whelp! get out of my office?”

“I called to have you explain why you insulted me under circumstances that precluded my resenting it.”

“You get out of this office, or I will put you out!”

“This is your office, judge, and if you do not please to give me satisfaction here, I will bide my time, and you shall.”

After making this remark, the detective walked out.

“If you come back, I will give you more satisfaction than you want.”

Detective Foy walked down upon the street, and waited for the judge to come downstairs. While standing near the hall, his friend, the young detective who had been to San Francisco, came up.

“Hello, Foy! when did you get back?”

“The first of the month.”

“How do you like the South?”

“I have not been in the South.”

“I heard you had been in the South, while I was in San Francisco.”

“No; I have been in Europe, and brought Dr. Fox back with me.”

“Have you got onto that villain?”

“With both feet.”

“I know something that will help you in that case and will put the shackles upon two of our men. I’ve been anxious to see you, but I was forced to leave the city before I could speak to you about it. I intended writing to you, but found you had gone. The night of the examination of Mrs. Bassett I was assisting Dr. Pierpont in his examination, when all at once he stopped, and said there was nothing in the case, but his face told another story. He told me that I could go, that he would go in and see the chief and have a talk with him, but he would not need me any more. I went out, and he went to the chief’s office. I slipped back, thinking that I would take a peep at the spot where he had come to his dead halt, but I had no time, for I heard them coming. I secreted myself in the room, to keep him from knowing I had been meddling. They locked the door and examined the head together.”

The young detective then told of the conversation that

took place, as has been related in a previous chapter.

“With this knowledge of yours my chain of evidence will be complete, and we shall have no trouble in convicting the trio, one of murder, and the other two of conspiracy. Before we talk any further on this subject I will tell you why I am standing here.”

“Excuse me, perhaps you would rather have me pass on?”

“No. I want you to stay here. I am waiting for Judge Brown to come downstairs. He has insulted me, and he has got to give me satisfaction. Here he comes. You stay by and hear our conversation.”

The judge came downstairs and met the detective, who walked up facing him.

“Judge Brown, I want you to give me satisfaction for that gratuitous insult you offered me in the presence of Mrs. Benney.”

The judge, without saying a word, gave a vicious kick at the detective, but missed him. The force of the kick almost overbalanced him, but he recovered and struck a violent blow at him with his cane, but the agility of the detective put a post between his head and the judge's cane. This instrument of warfare was broken and lost out of his hand. This so exasperated the judge that he pulled a revolver, and said:

“D——n you, you can't dodge this.”

A sharp report rang out; but the judge was as unsuc-

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

cessful in landing his leaden missile as he had been his foot and his cane. Detective Foy quickly drew his revolver on the judge and fired. There was a groan and a heavy fall.

Immediately a crowd gathered. Two policemen hurried detective Foy away and locked him up. As they were walking to the station the newsboys were calling out, "All about the suicide of Dr. Fox."

The detective was more interested in this news than in his own affair, and bought a paper to take with him to his cell.

An ambulance was called, and Judge Brown was tenderly carried home. Doctors pronounced his wound necessarily fatal, as the ball had entered just below the heart and passed entirely through the body. Crowds of excited people gathered everywhere to discuss the affair. Hourly bulletins announced the gradual decline of the wounded man. An extra edition of the evening paper came out with large headlines.

"JUDGE BROWN SHOT DOWN BY A VILLAIN-
OUS ASSASSIN! AN UNPROVOKED,
COLD-BLOODED MURDER!"

The judge was very popular, and the people were up in arms to wreak vengeance. On one of the street corners a plebeian by the name of Deacon Rice was standing upon a box, haranguing the populace to avenge the death of their



Deacon Rice inciting a mob.—Page 294.

beloved judge, telling the crowd that it was their duty as good citizens to take the law into their own hands and exterminate the vile wretch. "If we do not rid ourselves of such characters our homes will be rifled, our families trauced, and murder will become rife. Who will follow me to help to rid the city of Judge Brown's murderer?"

A hundred voices went up: "I!" "I will be with you!" "On! On!" "To the City Hall!" "Come, everybody, and hang the villainous murderer!"

The officers had become alarmed at the growing crowd and the excitement, and had spirited the prisoner away to the jail.

The mob gathered at the city hall, and were crying, "Foy! Give us Foy, the murderer!"

A young man was seen climbing up on a projection of the side wall of the building. When he got above the heads of the mob he called out:

"Gentlemen! citizens! listen to me. One word. Let me tell the truth as I saw it."

The mob yelled, "Down with him! he is an accomplice!"

"Hear me for one moment. I saw and heard every word."

Some one threw a brick, which struck the wall close to his head.

A man of conservative turn of mind cried out: "Listen to him! It can do no harm, and if he is a liar, hang him too!"

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

“Gentlemen, I saw the trouble from the start. The judge had insulted detective Foy, and——”

“That is a lie! Down with him!”

The young man was knocked off the wall, and as he fell he was stampted into insensibility, as the mob surged into the hall. It was some time before they could be convinced that the prisoner was not in the building, and their disappointment seemed to madden them, and their blood boiled. Some one suggested that the prisoner had been taken to the jail. Off they rushed, yelling like mad. At the jail they met the sheriff, who tried to reason with them, but he was given to understand that if he interfered with them in any way they would give him what they expected to give the prisoner.

“Gentlemen, there is no doubt but what you can kill me if you try, but I warn you now, that if you attempt to break the jail, I shall sell my life as dearly as possible.”

The leader cried out: “Follow me, boys! Don’t be backed down by one man,” and he struck the door with a sledge-hammer.

In an instant he dropped dead, with a bullet in his brain from the sheriff’s revolver. The excitement grew intense. The sheriff, true to his word, emptied his two revolvers as rapidly as possible, while the rocks and clubs fell thick and fast upon him. Over his body the mob poured. T rails, with fifty men to swing them, soon brought down the door of the jail. In the mob poured

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

and quickly found the man they wanted.

“You villain! You black-hearted murderer! You must die! We will give you two minutes to pray. Be quick!”

The prisoner raised his eyes and began:

“O God! Thy purposes are beyond the ken of man. We know that we are but means to ends. Give me wisdom to pray, that I may say, in the short time allotted me, something that will redound to the good of man. If it is not unreasonable to pray; if it is ever befitting the finite to suggest to the infinite, let this be one of the occasions, and inasmuch as I do not come to Thee craving Thy charity for myself, but to supplicate Thy mercy for these Thy earthly children, who are in mental darkness and passion, made so by unfortunate birth and environments, permit me to believe that on account of Thy superiority in love and charity, Thou canst be enlisted in their favor to do for them everything we would do if we had the power, which would be to forgive them and lift from them this great cloud of ignorance.

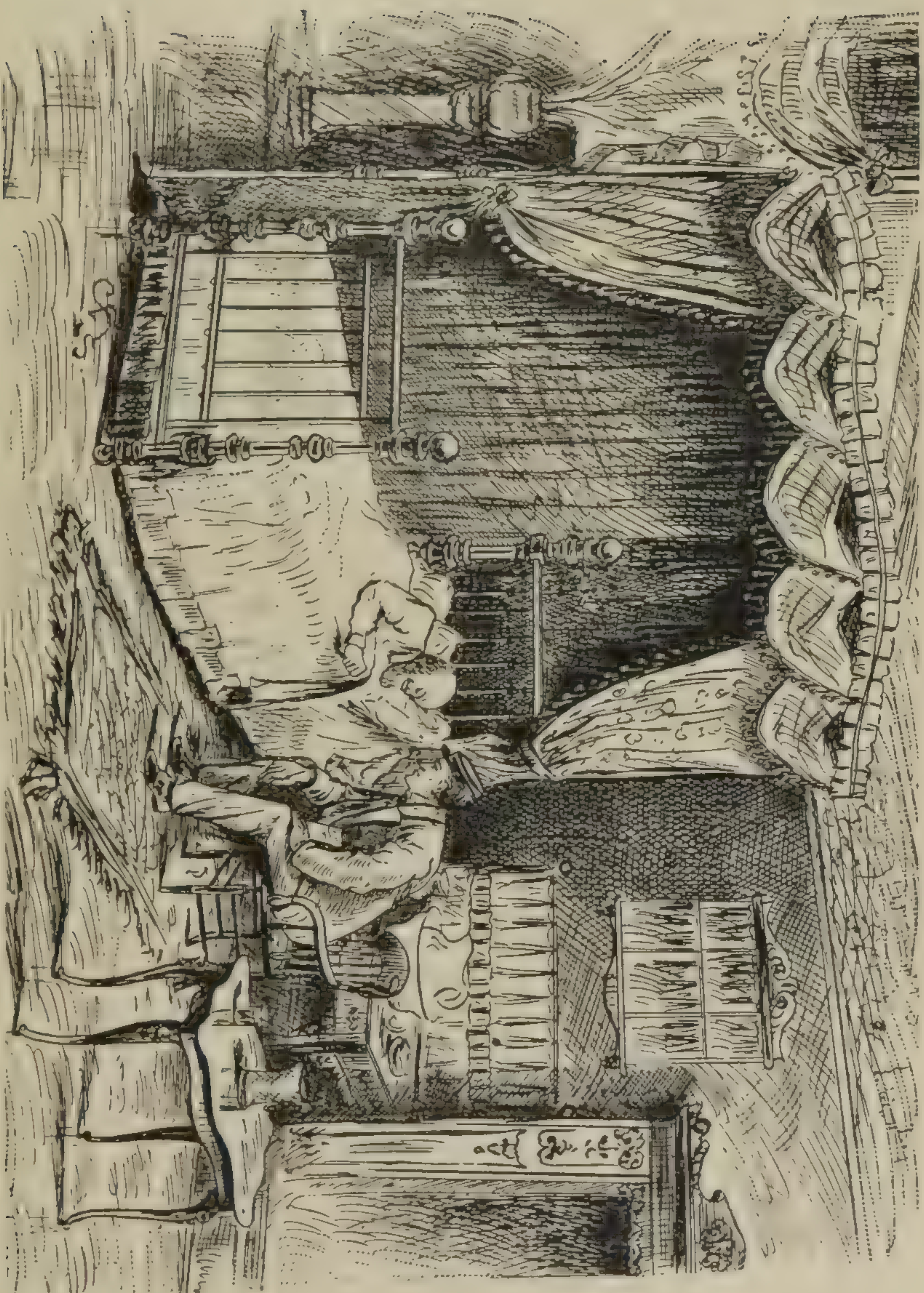
“Shape their destinies so that it will be possible for them to emerge from the darkness of their understanding, to the light of a knowledge that leads to the brotherhood of man, tempered with love and mercy coming from a Fatherhood with Thee. Implant in them a spark of divine love, that will take root and be transplanted to their progeny, to save the yet unborn the curse of this great dearth of moral

responsibility which delights in a carnival of death. Put it in the minds of the more fortunate of earth to lay by their sordid selfishness, and teach by precept and example the better attributes of human nature, such as love, sympathy, and charity. In some way may it be to Thy pleasure to neutralize the great immoral forces that are in process of transmission, and supplant them by a wisdom before which crime and ignorance will vanish. All this and more we ask for man's sake. Amen."

During the time the unfortunate man was praying the more ignorant and brutal of the mob were jeering at him, plucking at him, pinching him, and pulling his hair. One said to him: "You had better pray for yourself. You are so close to hell you ought to be able to smell the sulphur." Others would comment on his pluck. "He is a plucky devil." "I'll bet ten dollars he don't weaken."

Some of those with a mental calibre above the average were struck with awe at his cool, deliberate self-abandon, his complete unconcern at his own fate, and his deep, earnest interest at the misfortune of the mob. Had the whole mob been doomed to death he could not have exhibited more concern for their welfare. One man pushed through the crowd, beating a hasty retreat, and said:

"I wish I had not taken part in this horrible affair. That poor unfortunate fellow has proved to me by his actions that he is no cold-blooded murderer. There is something behind his crime that forced him into it, for a



"Judge, the doctors say you cannot live long."—Page 299.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

man with his interest in humanity cannot wilfully murder.”

When detective Foy had finished his prayer, he said:

“Gentlemen I have but one request to make. Be quick. I do not fear death, but I dread pain.”

A rope was quickly thrown around his neck; one jerk brought him above the heads of the crowd, when a volley of bullets pierced his body, and detective Foy was dead—a victim to his own sense of manhood and justice.

At the judge’s fine residence an officer was taking his ante-mortem statement.

“Judge, the doctors say you cannot live long. Will you give us, as near as possible, the facts in the case?”

It was with great effort the judge talked, for he was spitting much blood:

“Detective Foy was not to blame. I insulted him, and was not gentleman enough to apologize or give him satisfaction. I have not been feeling well of late, and was nervous and irritable, and while I knew my duty to him, I could not perform it. I assaulted him, and then shot at him. He acted in self-defense. I say this, expecting soon to pass to my final judgment.”

The judge passed away at daylight, the morning next following the day of the tragedy. The city on this morning was in mourning and deep humiliation. Sin had triumphed, justice had been cheated, and the blackest page of her history had been closed.

Dr. Fox, the deepest-dyed villain who had ever drawn

a breath, had lived and prospered; his life had been one perpetual role of sinful pleasure. He had sown the seeds of corruption in more hearts than can be told. He had cheated nature out of countless numbers of human beings. He had murdered, but what is infinitely worse, he had blotted out of the lives of the living, honor and virtue, two attributes without which life is not worth the living. This accumulation of crime, which is written in the lives of his thousands of victims, is a tremendous role of diabolical corruption, which will go on, and on, poisoning to endless posterity. What a cursed paradox, that for this legacy he lived a life of luxury, and in dying is honored and mourned as only a good man should be.

Judge Brown was a boon companion of Dr. Fox. They understood each other. They were a constant help to each other in times of threatened exposure, and it was befitting that they should both go out together. The judge had been very popular. It is true that his decisions were often somewhat distorted by his moral nature, but the comprehension of the masses was not able to discriminate. As few possess individuality enough to form independent opinions, the majority hold opinions second-hand; and as the opinion-making part of the community were his friends, the populace stood up for him. A man's popularity often depends upon a very few people. Dr. Fox owed much to Judge Brown, and the judge owed much to the doctor. Never has a city been called upon to mourn the loss at one

time of two more popular citizens, nor was there ever more unjust mourning.

Detective Foy was born of poor but honorable parents. He had inherited a keen sense of justice that knew no such thing as corruption. He could not be bought off. He received his greatest satisfaction in doing his work well and honorably. Monetary considerations were of secondary importance. Had he lived he would have left a bright record for faithfulness and fidelity to duty. He had imbibed from social ethics the barbaric idea that one must avenge an insult, and in maintaining his honor he incurred the displeasure of all the human animals in the city. A few more years of experience would have put such a nature as his beyond the possibility of being insulted by a beast, the wreck of gratified passions. Those would-be gentlemen who stand at all times ready to defend their honor, ought to know that this most exquisite quality in their natures is an indication of a lack of humanization or the result of a lowering of their manhood, by satiating their lustful nature, which always brutalizes.

A man in the vigor of health, with no exhausting habits, is mild of temper and slow to anger, and is more inclined to look with pity on those who offer gratuitous insult than to desire to measure strength with them. The young man who has been so foully educated that he stands ready to order pistols and coffee for two, needs humanizing and civilizing. On the part of the unfortunate detective,

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

his desire for revenge was due to his lack of experience with the world, and not from a vicious nature. After vindicating his honor, he became the victim of the ignorant inhumanity of man. His death is a fitting illustration of the unreliability of the opinions of the masses. This same opinion is the ruling voice of the world, and is more self-destructive than otherwise. It swallows itself. It is the author and builder of its own misery, distress, and destruction.

Deacon Rice incited the riot, and was the first to die. He headed the mob that killed a human protector—one of the few who have regard for the sacredness of home and family—a natural enemy of the defilers of honor. Judge Brown had stolen into Deacon Rice's home and robbed the flower of his family of the only quality that makes life valuable to a young woman, and his copartner in crime had helped him to blot out the evidence of shame.

The sheriff died at his post, a most reckless sacrifice, for with those wild human demons it was rash to resist. Those who died at the end of his revolver were the unthinking mudsills of humanity, the victims of social folly.

The young detective did not die, but he is maimed for life in body and mind—doomed in the springtime of life to loath and detest the cursed of the earth. A greater misfortune could not befall a young man than to blot out all sym-

pathy and charity for the people who are too unfortunate to think.

The sensational nature of the papers, which are nearly always ready to fawn upon and curry favor with those possessing influence to the injury of the obscure, is typically illustrated by the mob-inspiring headlines announcing the murder of Judge Brown. With many daily papers no attempt is made to get at the facts, their editors and reporters assuming the prerogative of rendering a verdict by obtaining evidence from one side only. They are all things to the rich and influential, and criminally ready to incite popular opinion against the unfortunate, if in doing so they can earn the approving smile of the snobbish gentility. Many newspapers are hero-worshipers and time-servers. A wholesome reformation would be for them to practice conservatism, and give both sides equal justice. The headlines were all that Deacon Rice saw; the latent aboriginal nature caught the needed inspiration, and from this small beginning the animal nature of the whole community took on the contagious rhythm, that knew no check until its force was expended in exterminating a being who had more humanism than had the whole ignorant, cruel, revengeful, and unreasoning mob, at whose hands he suffered an unjust and unjustifiable death.

TWENTY-THIRD.

TEN YEARS AFTER.

Contrary to the prevailing opinions in this christianized country, Mrs. Robert Benney did reform, and proved an ideal wife and mother. The manner of her husband's treatment of her, after her misfortune, lifted her up, gave her new courage, restored her ambition; and through his love for her, her self-pride—one of the saviors of the world—came back and resumed his sway over her life, to defend her, and do battle against the fiends who plot against the happiness of women. The Christ-life—which is the highest ideal in man—if practiced as Robert Benney practiced it toward his wife, would save countless numbers in every generation who are driven to the lowest depths of moral depravity by the inhuman, brutal treatment of sticklers for a moral code which many of these self-justified critics have broken, but more fortunately for themselves. The world is full of mistakes, and as this is a truism, it is a decent, humane attribute to be possessed of forgiveness. Society is full of people who advocate a high morality but do not practice it beyond self-interest. Each individual can extenuate his own crimes, but never those of his

neighbors. There is a great penalty for those who are unfortunate enough to be discovered in their blunders, and a great reward for those who can hide their mistakes. It has become almost a law, that to be caught in a crime is the evil thereof, but that any amount of transgression is permissible, provided it is hidden.

Those people who believe in prayer, and say, "Thy will be done in earth," but who never raise a hand except to prevent the bringing about of such a blessing, ought to be struck dumb until they learn to pray truthfully, knowingly, and understandingly. The lack of putting into practice the golden rule, by religionists, is one of the greatest reasons that the church life is so lifeless, and is the cause of much skepticism. I do not mean the skepticism of thinkers; for a man who thinks enough to be a skeptic will overlook these little shortcomings, and understand that they originate in ignorance; but the ignorant skeptic could be won over very easily by kind treatment, such as is advocated but never practiced by religionists.

Robert Benney has had nothing to regret, but grows more thankful, as the years roll by, to think he had the moral courage to be a man, and to treat his wife as becomes an intelligent animal. If the world could understand that there are times when every human being is more liable to make mistakes than at others, and that, if at this particular time circumstances should shape themselves favorably to a temporary departure from a moral standard, the strongest

are liable to fall, surely more charity would be shown. Some of the most lovable dispositions—people who make the most companionable companions—are more liable to err (on account of perverted inheritance and a temporary *diseased* condition) than others who have no lovable traits whatsoever. The very traits to which society is pleased to grant the greatest reward are often the greatest misfortune to their possessors.

Robert Benney finds his greatest happiness, and the encouragement that makes him a successful business man, in those very attributes which, under a false education and ignorance, caused by Mrs. Benney to depart from the path of rectitude.

Under proper influences a great percentage of unfortunate women would make angel wives. To be truly lovable, one must be capable of being very good or very bad; mediocre people never appeal to the patrons of either extreme.

Mrs. Adams broke down completely after the suicide of Dr. Fox, and, like all high-spirited women, aged very rapidly after losing interest in life. She had been a belle in her youth, had enjoyed in her childhood the luxuries of an aristocratic New England home, and only left it for environments equally good, as the wife of Senator Adams, a prominent politician, capitalist, and mine-broker, who spent his time in clubs, meetings, and business, to the extent of neglecting his aristocratic wife. This neglect

piqued Mrs. Adams for a time, but her philosophical nature quickly adjusted itself to the inevitable, and she soon found elsewhere the admiration she coveted. Pride and ambition, coupled with excellent discretion, governed her life, and as she despised the common and the low, she never permitted her double life to bring discredit or reproach upon either herself or her family; and as her church and social relations were always of the best, the occasional unsavory vapors that would arise were quickly discredited by her friends, and accounted for as being originated by jealous calumniators. Aside from her relationship with Dr. Fox, there never had been a breath of suspicion against her; and in the doctor's palmy days it would have been worth the reputation of an individual to have spoken reproachfully or slightingly of him. There never were two more successful dissemblers (not a unique art in society). Two as great experts as they were it is not the privilege of every city to have.

Dr. Fox was the author of Mrs. Adams' expertness, for she lacked the diabolical inheritance to become skilled in a double life without a tutor, and one too who possessed entire control over her emotions. Dr. Fox will receive the condemnation of all who pretend to uphold a moral code.

Let those who value truth at anything, and who are willing to let his case rest on its merits, go with me through the analysis of his life, as set forth in the preceding chapters, go with me back to his life's sweet beginning.

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

There we see his young mother, a sweet, innocent New England girl, with all the charm of rustic beauty. She knew nothing of the great world outside of the horizon that bounded the little home that had given her birth; the few people she had met in her short life were the honest yeomen of the neighborhood, and she was as innocent of any knowledge of hypocrisy and deceit as it is possible for a human being to be. In this state of life, and in this quiet, sequestered spot, she met a young English lord, who was smitten by her unique form and charming face, and who turned his back on his lordly inheritance to live in her smiles. You will say that he was not honest—that he did not love her. But you are mistaken; he did love her—little you know of human nature—he was desperately in love with her; he could not help it. He vowed his love to her, and he was honest in it.

True, the sequel proved that he was a child of lust—but will you hold him responsible for that? Look back in old England where he was begotten. There you will see his progenitors, both of them revelling in opulence and leisure, nature's hotbed for the germination of lust. There is where he was begotten; there is where he inherited his nature and his type of love. You say it was lust, not love. Perhaps it was; but how are the inexperienced to know? Intellectual love is a cold, heartless, calculating, sordid thing, devoid of emotion and sympathy, a quality of character that comes after the romances of life are dead. It is

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

the senile representative of youthful gallantry and chivalry; it is not satisfying to the young and hopeful; in fact, it is the young grown old from satiety.

The poor, sweet girl was proud and fond of her lordly lover; she worshiped him; she would rather have died than have given him up. She would not listen to her mother's warnings of the incongruity of a marriage between a poor, ignorant girl, and a child of fashion. The mother could not make her see that society would not permit her, good, pure, and sweet though she was, to be the wife of a lord. The sweet words of her lover gave her assurance that the mother was mistaken; that he would go home, and hasten back to his love, his life, his all. She believed him, for hearts read hearts, and hearts cannot be mistaken. She gave him an affectionate farewell, and lived in tears of love and expectation till the time arrived for his return; but instead of his return, a letter came telling her of the cruel opposition of his parents; that they would disinherit him if he returned to her.

He bewailed his fate, and contemplated suicide; but this affected display of despair little satisfied her who knew no satisfaction but to have her lover.

Bewailing her fate, she turned to cursing it; shame and disgrace converted that sweet, innocent life into the life of a fiend; the attribute of maternal love was turned into hate, and every means known to her crude life was used to produce foeticide; but, failing in this, she took the young

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

life that had come from a love-beginning, wrapped it up, and put it where she hoped the dumb animals would do for it what she had so long tried to do.

But the child was fortunate in being picked up and furnished with a good home. Its latent prenatal curse was kept down from lack of proper germinating environments until manhood; but when transplanted to the sharp competition of a professional life, we see the pent-up curse grow and thrive under the stimulating influence of our social system; for such a nature as his can find in any modern community all the nourishment necessary to develop the demon. With his origin, is it not a wonder that he did not commit more crime? Is it not a wonder that he had the cunning to draw admiration from any? Dr. Fox's type of manhood did not die with him; it is to be found thriving in most communities, and it will continue to evolve as long as the social nidus continues to furnish the differentiating potentiality.

Dr. Beeby took Dr. Headly's advice and quit the profession, for he was ambitious to make money, and he could not take the risk of spending half a lifetime in the experiment of working up in the profession, unless allowed to take short-cuts. His last remark to Dr. Headly was to the point, and the point that glints many honest, conscientious, and ambitious men out of the profession:

"Doctor, I have been in the profession long enough to find out that unless a man has wealth or influence he must

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH

either cater to the demands of the people in questionable practice, be dishonest in not discovering and disabusing people's minds of foolish whims, take advantage of their ignorance, advertise, or remain poor as long as he lives."

I believe that seventy-five per cent of the profession will say that he did right. The majority of medical men fifty years old would not select the profession of medicine again if they could go back and live their lives over. Not that they do not love the work, but because it is such a struggle with a world of ignorance.

Mrs. Cline is an invalid for life. She succeeded in cheating nature out of its normal operations, and now nature is cheating her out of comfort and happiness. Her neighbors have great sympathy for her, and many of them are at a loss to understand why Providence is making such a martyr of so lovable, God-fearing a woman as she is.

Dr. Headly is a well-preserved man with regular habits. He affects stoicism, but one does not need to know him long to explode such an idea. He has a large heart, and can cry with those who cry, and laugh with those who laugh. He can scold and storm when his patients do not follow his directions; order them to either follow directions or get another physician, adding, "And I don't give a d——n which;" then, as soon as they are out of sight, abuse himself all day for being cross to them; for, as he fully admits to himself, "People act the best they can

under their circumstances.” He is in his belief a materialist, but not of the pessimistic order. He believes that none can be pessimists unless they are spoiled in their training and self-discipline; “that incorrigible obstinacy in fighting against the inevitable, instead of philosophically acquiescing in the inevitable, grows into an irrational obstinacy known as pessimism. It is so irrational that it should be looked upon as a disease, and ranks legitimately with monomania.”

The doctor’s experience has almost made a fatalist of him. His belief makes him look upon the conduct of people with charity. “Poor fellow! he can’t help doing as he does, for he is built that way.” “I am sorry for that poor woman. She is a sexual pervert; she has been born wrong; reared amid unfavorable environments; her life and education have intensified her lust nature, and the world is operating in opposition to her. There is no hope in the world for her, and but little in her religion. What a grand thing that, in spite of her life, the belief of herself and those who have no charity for her, that nature has wisely provided a restful sleep for her at the end of her unappreciated and unrestful life!” “That poor boy—there is no hope for him. He inherits dipsomania; his early domestic training has not given him self-control. In fact, his lack of discipline has saddled his prenatal curse upon him, and in spite of all *cures* he must go down and die as he was born. Dissolution and the disintegrating process we call

death is the only purifier for him."

The doctor analyzes his cases and predicts the end, and as he deals with cause and effect, his prognosis is usually right. He is looked upon as a skeptic, but I will wager anything that he has as many facts to found a philosophy upon as has any man. Such thinkers as he do not pin their faith to ideas simply because they are popular. It has taken him years to build his opinions, and they are confined to man and nature—the relation of the former to the latter.

He looks upon the result of Mrs. Benney's reform as most rare, and a victory for reason over the customs of superstition. There is no question that Robert Benney's grand, noble qualities, assisted by Dr. Headly's advice, saved Mrs. Benney in spite of her tendencies; while, on the other hand, Dr. Fox's demonical influence succeeded in blasting a life that was originally pure; for there is no doubt that Mrs. Adams, aside from her love of flattery, inherited splendid qualities.

Environments make and distort character. Natural perverts *can* be saved; very few *are*. The best qualities of character, under unfortunate influences, may go down, but seldom do; and their superior natures, when once down, will often restore them to their proper elements. A child well born is ninety per cent saved; while, on the other hand, a child prenataally cursed is ninety per cent lost. Is it wise? Is it just? Is it the best belief upon which to found a religious philosophy and formulate a code of morals—the

CURSED BEFORE BIRTH.

idea that all mankind are born equal and responsible, and that there is a personal God, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent?

* * * * *

If the heterogeneous thoughts spread out on the pages of this book cause anyone to think, its object will be attained; if in the heat of argument I have left the impression that I have not faith in the ultimate desire of everyone to do good, or be good, I have succeeded in misrepresenting myself. Man is what he is per force of circumstances; and not one can be found who does not have the altruistic sentiments, even though they are relegated to the background of his nature to give place to the selfishness which our social system forces upon us in our struggle for existence. I think I can truly say, I never met a man wholly devoid of good qualities. I have faith in and love mankind; I hate only disease.

THE END.

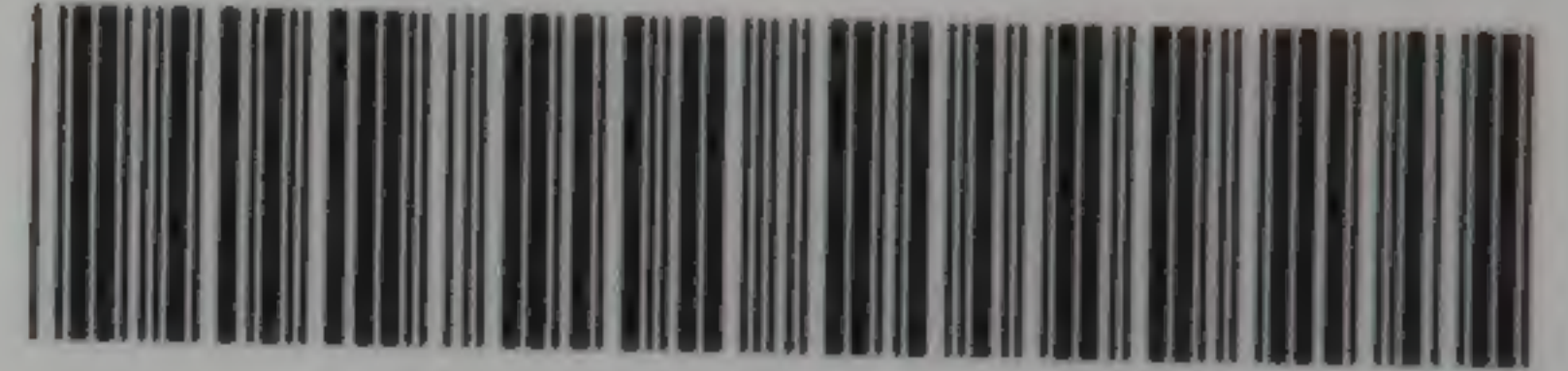




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